



















FAIRY TALES FROM FAR AWAY









"Then Little Dianda stopped and began to sing"

Page 27



# Fairy Tales From Far Away

BY

FREDERICK H. MARTENS

*Illustrated in Color  
and Black and White*

BY

DA LORIA NORMAN



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## TO THE FRIENDLY READER

THE delightful Fairy Books of many colors compiled by the late Andrew Lang, whose stories were retold from the fairytale literature of many different countries, still maintain their deserved popularity. The fact that new books of fairytales are continually published and win appreciation, however, shows that existing volumes do not supply the demand.

Now, one peculiarity of fairytale literature is that it is practically exhaustless. Just as there still are as good fish in the sea as have been taken out of it, so there are still as many lovely fairytales remaining untold as have been told. And of good fairytales the world never tires.

In these "Fairy Tales from Far Away," the first book of a "Far Away" series, the compiler has gathered—for all children who enjoy fairytales—many new stories to amuse and entertain them. And, as in all good fairy stories, he hopes the readers will find in each something worth remembering: some little lesson of bravery, devotion, generosity or kindness; some incentive to sacrifice, courage and courtesy.

Most of these tales are folk fairytales; no one knows who first made them up; some are "art" fairytales,

## TO THE FRIENDLY READER

invented by men and women with a gift for telling stories. Nearly all of them have been retold from other languages, and many hundreds were examined in order to find those which their readers would most enjoy and which would be most worth while enjoying.

This being the case, the teller of the tales wishes his readers as much pleasure in the reading of these stories as he had in finding and narrating them.

FREDERICK H. MARTENS.

*Rutherford, N. J.*

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# FAIRY TALES FROM FAR AWAY

## THE HOMESICK BOY

ONCE upon a time, off the shore of a far part of Greenland, where only the Eskimos are able to live amid the endless stretches of snow and ice, a great ship from warm southern lands was seized by the ocean currents and shattered against the rocky coast. The great white sails of the unlucky ship were soon hidden by a raging snow-storm which arose; but the Eskimos could hear the cries of those on deck, although none could make their way to the ship through the storm.

But when the storm died down the Eskimos climbed over the ice and went along the shore to see what had been cast up by the waves. And there they found the masts, with the tattered sails still clinging to them, spars and other wreckage, as well as boxes and kegs and barrels of food, and the bodies of those who had drowned. And last of all they spied a great wooden chest, riding high on the water. The tide had turned and was about to carry the chest out to sea when one of the Eskimos caught it and dragged it ashore. And

when he had tied a rope of walrus-hide to it and dragged it to his *igloo*, the hut of ice-blocks in which he lived, he opened it. There, on soft cloths, lay a handsome boy. His skin was not brown, like that of the Eskimos, but white as reindeer moss, his hair was as yellow as cedar-wood, and his eyes were true blue like the summer skies.

The white boy, whose skin was the color of reindeer moss, grew up with the Eskimo boys of the *igloos* and shared their games and sports. He learned to swim, to paddle a canoe, and to harpoon seals. Not a lad of the village could creep up on the seals when they lay basking on the ice as silently as he could. The Eskimos grew so used to him that they never thought of his white skin, yellow hair and blue eyes, so different from their own. They forgot that he had come out of the sea in a wooden chest, and had not been born in an *igloo*, and never thought of the time when he had not lived among them. He sang the Eskimo songs, he ate and drank as they did when they gathered in a ring about the fire. The Eskimo women made him a coat of seal-fur and loved to see him dart by on his snow shoes, shouting with glee.

Ten or twelve years went by and then—the boy with skin as white as reindeer moss, and hair as yellow as cedar-wood and eyes as blue as the summer skies began to pine. He no longer sang the songs of the tribe, he no longer hunted the seal, for he had grown homesick

for that land he had never known and never seen. There was room in his heart only for the longing he felt, and more and more he left his companions and went off by himself. When the sky turned red in the evening, he would lie on the cliffs that overhung the shore. There he would stay for hours, looking out to sea, toward the south, in the direction from which the great ship with the white sails had come.

In vain the brown Eskimo boys who were his friends begged him to go hunting with them. In vain his foster-mother and the other women worked soft moccasins for his feet and dyed his leather straps with bright colors. He did not notice it. Spring was drawing near, and the nearer it came the more silent grew the boy with skin like reindeer moss. At times he did not seem to recognize any of those whom he knew, and would start up as though from a dream when they spoke to him.

And one day, when he had gone to snare sea-birds along the cliffs, he did not come back. He was gone, and neither the Eskimos nor their dogs could find a trace of him. He seemed to have vanished in the air. Some years later they found some of the furs he had sworn along the sea-shore. And then they knew he must have flown back through the air to his home country, where the skins of the people are not brown, like those of the Eskimos, but white as the reindeer



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moss. For the land of our birth is the land of the heart's longing. There are no seas so wide and no skies so broad that they can keep us from trying to find our way back to it again.

## NEVER RUN FROM A LION

ONCE upon a time there lived in a city of the Orient a young prince by the name of Azgiol, who was virtuous and intelligent—but, alas, a little cowardly!

When his father died and Prince Azgiol was looking forward to his own coronation, his father's old vizier came to him a few days before the time set for the ceremony, and told him that before he could take his place on the throne, he would have to comply with a venerable custom, one which had been observed ever since the foundation of the kingdom. According to this custom the new sultan would have to fight with a great red lion caged in the underground cellars of the palace, in order to show that he was worthy to rule.

When he heard this, Prince Azgiol was so frightened that he at once decided to flee, and immediately put his decision into effect. Rising in the middle of the night, he dressed hastily, mounted his horse and rode out of the city.

Three days after his shameful flight, Azgiol came to a delightful plantation of trees from which, carried on the pure, cool breeze, rose the most exquisite musi-

cal sounds. These were made by a handsome youth who was playing a flute, while at the same time he kept a watchful eye on a small flock of sheep. The shepherd courteously saluted the traveller, who begged him to keep on playing, for never in his life had Azgiol listened to such harmonious music. Then the musician told Azgiol that he was the slave of a rich landowner named Oaxus, to whose nearby home he offered to lead the fugitive. The prince gratefully accepted this invitation, and a few moments later he entered the house of Oaxus, who gave his visitor a cordial reception and offered him food and drink.

When Azgiol had finished eating, he looked Oaxus in the eye and said: "No doubt you would like to know who I am, and what brings me to this place. All I can tell you is that I am a prince whom certain events have driven from his country. Forgive me, but I do not reveal my name, for this is a secret which I must keep with the utmost care. But if you have no objection, I should like to remain in this place. I am not without means, and can pay for your hospitality."

Oaxus assured the prince that it would give him great pleasure to have him stay in his home as long as he chose, and begged him not to hurt his feelings by offering him money.

"And now, Isdril," added Oaxus, turning to his slave, "show the prince our fountains and our canyons, our groves, our rocks and our vales, for I am sure that I



is capable of enjoying the surprising beauty of our natural surroundings."

Isdril obediently took up his flute and went out with the prince.

After they had walked about the marvelously lovely countryside, the two sat down to rest in a shady little valley all abloom with flowers. Isdril raised his flute to his lips and commenced to play a melody which filled Azgiol with rapture and amazement. He began to think that, should he leave these pleasant surroundings at some future time, he would, if Oaxus were willing, buy his slave, who was such an excellent musician. Suddenly the shepherd brusquely broke off the enchanting air which so delighted the prince and, rising to his feet, said:

"It is time for us to go."

"But why need we leave this beautiful valley so soon?" asked the prince.

"The countryside hereabout is full of lions," answered the shepherd, "and it is only prudent to leave the valley early. Once I forgot this, and I vowed it would never happen again." And with this Isdril showed the prince a great scar he had on his arm.

Azgiol grew pale and walked on in silence, speaking never a word. When they reached the house, he told Oaxus he had changed his mind, and that he would keep on travelling awhile instead of remaining with him. Then he thanked him for his hospitality, took

leave of him and of Isdril, and rode off at a gallop.

He pushed on for three days, and at the end of the fourth reached a vast desert in which, far in the distance, he saw what looked like a camp half-hidden in the sands. Drawing nearer, he was rejoiced to see the black tents of a tribe of desert horsemen rise before his eyes, for he was eager to find human beings, since both his horse and himself were worn out with hunger and fatigue.

The prince was received by a desert chief, a dignified and hospitable man. When Azgiol had broken bread with him, Hajaar, for such was the chief's name, told the prince, just as Oaxus had done, that he wished no reward but the pleasure of his company, and that he should be his guest as long as he felt inclined. Then he made Azgiol known to most of the other tribesmen, and presented him with a magnificent horse, speckled black and white.

Two days went by. Every morning Azgiol rode with the chief to hunt antelope, taking great pleasure in the chase, and thinking to himself that he could not have found a more happy and tranquil mode of life when, one night, after he had lain down to rest, Hajaar came to his couch and said:

"My son, there is something I have to tell you. All my tribesmen are content with you, especially because of the skill you have shown in your antelope-hunting. Yet our life cannot be given over altogether to such

pleasant sports. At times we have to fight fiercely against other tribes. Now, my men are all finished warriors and, before placing entire confidence in you, they would like to have you give proof of your bravery. Two leagues distant from this place are mountains filled with lions. Early to-morrow morning rise, mount your speckled horse, take my cutlass and lance, kill a lion, and bring back his skin. Then we will know that we can trust you in the day of battle."

No sooner had the chief left him than Azgiol rose, dressed, silently stole from his tent, and took a sad farewell of the speckled horse which Hajaar had given him. Then he mounted his own, and fled from the camp of the tribesmen in the shadow of the night.

On the evening of the following day he saw with joy that he had come to the end of the desert. He now rode through a picturesque stretch of country in which hills, green meadows and silver streams combined to form landscapes of magic charm.

Finally, when he had ridden through a little wood, he found himself at the entrance of a splendid palace, which rose in the midst of a wonderful garden. Its owner, a wealthy emir, happened to be sitting at the moment in the portico of the palace, together with a golden-haired maiden. The emir received the prince graciously. He at once took him into the palace, which was even more beautiful within than without, for it dazzled the eyes with a multicolored profusion of gold



and precious stones. The walls and ceilings were adorned with the rarest arabesques and the windows glowed with stained-glass panes of the richest hues. When they had entered the palace, the emir at once offered his guest the most savory viands in great plenty.

Azgiol made himself known to the emir in due form, giving his rank but not his name, and begged that he might be allowed to remain for a time in his splendid dwelling. The emir courteously replied that he would be glad to have him remain to the end of his days, if he so wished, and then asked to be excused for a few minutes, since he was expecting friends and wished to make the necessary preparations to receive them.

Azgiol was left alone with the golden-haired maiden. She turned out to be the emir's daughter, Perizida by name, and Azgiol realized that he had fallen in love the very first moment he had seen her. She took him to the garden and after having shown him all its beautiful flowers they returned to the palace.

The halls of the palace, in which thousands of candles now burned, were filled with guests, whom Azgiol passed with Perizida by his side. In a quiet corner the young prince saw a lute lying on a divan, and asked Perizida whether she would sing a song to its accompaniment, a request which the lovely girl at once granted. Yet at the moment when the prince was in the seventh heaven of delight listening to her music, a strange roaring sound interrupted his enjoy-

ment. Azgiol asked Perizida what the sound might be.

"Nothing at all," replied the young girl with a smile. "It is only Bulak, our black gate-keeper, who is yawning."

"He must have a splendid pair of lungs," cried Azgiol.

When the guests had gone, and Perizida also had excused herself and retired, the emir and the prince sat talking for a while until the former said he would take Azgiol to the apartment in which he was to sleep. They were slowly walking along when, coming to the foot of the sumptuous staircase, all made of blocks of green and yellow marble, Azgiol was horrified to see an enormous black lion stretched out on the topmost step. With dismay in his voice he asked the emir how such a beast came to be there.

"That is only Bulak, our black gate-keeper," said the emir. "He is a tame lion, who will do you no harm if you are not afraid of him. But if he knows that you are afraid of him he turns ugly."

"I am afraid of him," said the prince.

And it was not possible for the emir to get him to go up the staircase. They had to return to the hall in which they had been sitting, and there Azgiol remained, to make the best of a divan.

As soon as he was alone, Azgiol carefully locked the door and windows before he lay down. Yet he could

not sleep a wink, for he could hear the lion pass up and down, and once the beast came to the door and, roaring terribly, flung himself against it, so that it trembled beneath his weight.

Now, while he lay there sleepless, Azgiol commenced to think things over. No doubt, he had offended Providence when he ran away from the old red lion who was kept in the palace, for ever since then it had fairly rained lions wherever he went. He made a great resolve to submit to fate, and do what was expected of him. He determined to return to his own country and comply with the condition which would let him take his rightful place on the throne.

Hence, no sooner did he meet the emir the following morning than he told him the whole truth. The emir, who had known Azgiol's father, the Sultan Almamun, heartily approved of the young man's resolution, provided him with everything necessary for a rapid trip back to his own land, and gave him his blessing as he rode off. Azgiol took leave without seeing the lovely Perizida again.

On his way back, Azgiol passed the camp of the desert Arabs and, just as he had told the truth to the emir, he now repeated it to the kindly Hajaar. He also asked him about the handsome black and white horse which he had given him before.

"Gladly would I have you remain with us and ride him again," said Hajaar, "but I would not put any-



thing in the way of your worthy enterprise. Return to your native land and do your duty like a man."

Then Azgiol visited Oaxus, to whom, as to the others, he confessed his name and his shame, together with his repentance and his new resolve.

"Ride on your way, my friend," said the noble landowner, "and may Allah grant you the strength necessary to bring your enterprise to a happy ending!"

Azgiol begged him to greet Isdril for him, and to tell him that he hoped to return some time to listen to his sweet music without fear of the lions.

The prince then continued on his way until he reached his palace, and when he dismounted he told the old vizier of his resolve to fight the red lion.

The old man wept with happiness to see the prince back again and ready to undertake the battle with the lion. He at once made all arrangements for the approaching struggle, which was to take place the following week. At last the day and hour arrived, and the prince entered the arena in which the red lion was awaiting him. No sooner did he see his rival than the beast gave a frightful roar and drew near him, glaring at him fiercely the while. But Azgiol did not weaken. With eye untroubled and his head held high, he moved forward to meet the beast, holding his lance in his hand. As he came nearer, the lion leaped and, with another roar, passed above the prince's head without touching him! Then he at once came running back

to Azgiol and began to lick his hands as a sign of submission.

Now it was that the old vizier told the prince that he had won the battle and could withdraw from the ring. And as he went, the lion followed in his footsteps like a dog.

"You see, Prince Azgiol," said the vizier, "that the lion is tame and quite harmless. But this you did not know, and thus you have proved your bravery in daring to fight the beast. I can now tell you that you are worthy of seating yourself on the throne of your heroic ancestors."

Two men, one old, the other young, now drew near to congratulate the prince. They were Oaxus and Isdril.

"Prince Azgiol," said the old land-owner, "as a remembrance of the happy day I take pleasure in making you this gift," and with these words he gave him his slave Isdril.

"I thank you with all my heart, Oaxus," answered Azgiol. And, turning to Isdril, he continued, "As for you, Isdril, you are no longer a slave! From this moment on I declare you free. You shall be my friend and companion, and delight me with your exquisite music."

Next the desert chieftain, Hajaar, came forward, together with some of his tribesmen and the black and

white speckled horse, which had so pleased the prince.

"Azgiol," he said, "I congratulate you with all my heart and beg that you will take this horse as a gift!"

The prince embraced the chief, thanked him and kissed the horse, which fondly nuzzled him in return for his caress.

Last of all, the emir presented himself before Azgiol. He was surrounded by a splendid suite of attendants, with musicians and banners.

"I have come to congratulate you, Prince," said he. "I have brought you no gift, but I am yours, and all that I have is at your disposal."

"Your presence makes me happy," Azgiol said to him; "but tell me, where is your daughter? And, once I have been crowned, may I come to visit her in your palace?"

"You need not go so far to find her," returned the emir. "Come with me." And he led Azgiol to the side of Perizida who, her lovely face covered with a heavy veil of tulle, was sitting on a white horse and waiting for him a short distance away.

Azgiol's coronation and his wedding with Perizida were celebrated on one and the same day, and they reigned long and happily. One of the first things that Azgiol did after he became king was to set down this story of his adventures as a lesson to all princes—and



others—who are a trifle cowardly. And on the big green gate of his marble palace he had graven in great golden letters the following words:

NEVER RUN FROM A LION

## THE RATTLES OF SIWARA

**I**N the great forests of the Orinoco, where the *botuto*, the sacred trumpet of the Great Spirit, sounds mysteriously at night, and sets the enchanted white jaguars on red-rocked Mount Roarima howling, there once dwelt a Warau Indian who had a wife and four children, two sons and two daughters. One day he and his wife went to a neighboring village to take part in a great feast, leaving the daughters at home. After they had gone, when the daughters went to the brook to fetch water—for they meant to prepare *kaschiri*, a pleasant drink made of the sweet cassava root—they heard a peculiar cry. And he who cried was Siwara, the Spirit of the Wood, who was purposely deceiving them by calling with the voice of the great hawk. The girls then challenged the hawk, as was the Indian custom, calling out: “Do not scream, but show yourself to us, or kill some game for us!” Yet in vain they called on the hawk, for it made no reply. But the girls, though they did not know it, had called upon Siwara, the Spirit of the Wood, himself, to show himself to them.

Not long after, when they had returned home, a young man came to the house. “Good day to you,

cousins!" said he as he entered the house, and then asked: "Where are your parents?" This was Siwara, the Spirit of the Wood, who had followed their invitation to show himself. So the girls told him that the others had all gone to a festival, and offered him *cassava* to eat and *kaschiri* to drink. When he had satisfied his hunger and thirst, Siwara told them to go to the edge of the forest and fetch the fat *hokko* hen he had brought them. And when they had done so he begged them to bring his hammock, saying that he would stay overnight. So they fetched the hammock and hung it at the far end of the house, and they heard no more of Siwara until the following morning, when before leaving, he told them to say nothing to their parents about his visit.

Not long afterward their parents returned, and when they saw the fine roasted *hokko* hen they cried: "How did you get it?" So the girls said: "We saw a great hawk which had seized it, and we took it away from it!" Then all sat down to eat the *hokko* hen, and the father, just as he was chewing a piece he had taken from the pot, bit upon a piece of blow-gun arrow. At once he turned to his daughters and said to them: "If a hawk killed the bird, where did the arrow come from?" Now the girls were forced to admit that an unknown uncle had brought them the *hokko* hen. "Why did you not say so at once!" cried their father. "Why did you not let us know that he had visited you



while we were away! Go at once and call him in!"

So the girls went to the edge of the forest and called: "*Daku, daku!*" which means "Uncle, uncle!" And at once Siwara responded to their call. When he entered the house the girls' father welcomed him, and he seated himself on the seat carved in the likeness of the *kaiman*, the alligator, which was offered him.

"Thanks, thanks," said Siwara, "I was here yesterday and kept your daughters company!" Now the old father was much impressed by Siwara's appearance and his manners and so, on the impulse of the moment, he offered him his oldest daughter for a wife. This was just what Siwara wanted, and he at once turned to the girl's mother and inquired whether she would care to have him for a son-in-law. She replied that she would, and so it was that the Spirit of the Wood obtained a wife, and took up his abode with her in her father's house.

For a time they all lived together in great happiness and contentment. Siwara, the Spirit of the Wood, proved to be a good husband and son-in-law. Whenever he went out hunting in the forest he came back loaded with game. And he also took the trouble to show his brothers-in-law how to shoot the *tajacu*, the wild pig, with the blow-pipe. They actually did not know what a wild pig was; formerly they had often brought home a bird and said it was a wild pig in their ignorance. Siwara took them along with him one day,

and when they had reached a good place he whirled his magic rattle—of which you shall know more anon—and the *tajacu*, wild pigs, hurried up, obedient to its call. “There are your wild pigs!” cried Siwara. “Shoot, shoot!” But the two brothers, who had never seen the *tajacu* before, were frightened, and climbed into a tree; so Siwara had to shoot three or four himself for them to take home. Time went by, and after Siwara’s wife had given him a little son he was acknowledged as the heir to all that the family owned. Then Siwara brought his own property, which up to this time he had kept concealed in the forest, to the house of his father-in-law.

Among the things which Siwara, the Spirit of the Wood, brought to his new home were the four magic rattles which he used to hunt the wild pig. Now, there are two kinds of wild pig, the *tajacu*, which wears a collar of white bristles about its neck and is harmless, and the black *pecari*, which wears no collar, and is a savage and dangerous beast. For each kind of wild pig Siwara had a pair of magic rattles, one to call them to him and one to drive them away. They were beautiful rattles, made of polished gourds and adorned with the brilliant green and scarlet feathers of the *colibri* and the *jacamatica*; yet their outward beauty was not their greatest merit. For these were magic rattles made of the gourds of the sacred calabash-tree which Arawanili, the first of the sorcerer-

magicians, had planted on the island of Kaieri, from the seed given him by Orehu, the Mother of Waters. And, like all the magic rattles that grow on the sacred calabash-tree, they had been filled by the power of Orehu with jewels of the ocean, the gleaming white stones which the Mother of Waters had gathered at the bottom of the sea, and with which she had filled the first magic rattle for Arawanili.

So, when Siwara shook the magic rattles which called the wild pigs, they did not rattle like peas in a pod or like stones in an ordinary gourd. Instead, the gleaming white jewels from the bottom of the sea sang a song as they struck against the sides of the rattle. In the rattles which called the pigs, they made a luring, compelling music, which filled the *tajacu* and *pecari* with a longing to hasten to its sound. And in the rattles which drove away the pigs, the white jewels sang with a voice that made them homesick for the densest and greenest shades of the forest, where the foot of the hunter never treads. The wild pigs did not know why they had to follow the lure of Siwara's magic rattles, but follow it they did. And thus it was that Siwara always had good hunting.

Now, when Siwara had hung up his magic rattles in the house of his father-in-law, he warned his wife's relatives never to touch them, since if they did much misfortune would come of it. And all the family promised that they would not touch the rattles. Then,



after he had warned them, Siwara went into the forest to clear a field. And while he was gone his brothers-in-law returned, and there Siwara's beautiful magic rattles hung in a row on the wall. With their carved handles and richly-colored feathers they swung from their thongs in the breeze which passed through the house, and within them the gleaming white jewels from the bottom of the sea sang softly, O very softly! Yet, no matter how softly they sang, the hearts of the brothers were filled with longing to take the magic rattles and shake them so that they might hear them more clearly. So, forgetting what Siwara had told them, the older brother took a rattle from the wall and went before the house and shook it, and the more he shook it, the louder and sweeter grew its music, and the hearts of both the brothers were filled with delight.

But, alas, the rattle taken from the wall was the one which lured the savage *pecari* with its song! And of a sudden great herds of these ferocious black pigs came hastening up from every direction. They came from far and near, and Siwara's wife, his two brothers-in-law and the old folk had no more than taken refuge in the nearest trees, than they covered the ground about the house. And, alas, in her haste and excitement, Siwara's wife had left behind her babe, which the furious *pecari* at once trod underfoot! From their trees the family now cried for Siwara to come quickly and drive off the savage beasts so that they might safely

climb down again. And Siwara came quickly, shook the magic rattle which drove away the *pecari*, and the black droves disappeared as quickly as they had come. Then, when they had all climbed down from the trees, Siwara looked for his child. Alas, it was not to be found! Then Siwara blamed his wife and her kinsfolk for not having obeyed his command, and in his wrath and sorrow he left them for good and all, taking with him the magic rattles which had grown in the sacred calabash-tree of the island of Kaieri. And after Siwara had left them, there was no more good hunting for that family of Warau Indians, and they often found it hard to obtain food, all because a promise made had been broken, and a word given had not been kept.

## THE YBOUMBOUN'S TAIL

ONCE upon a time, in the land of Gourmantie, there lived a boy named little Dianda, who wanted to go hunting. He went to his father, Tangari, and said: "Father, give me a bow-string that is stronger than strong!" and his father gave him a bow-string made of plaited deer-skin, and Dianda went off to try it out. Yet no sooner had he fastened it to his bow and stretched it than it broke. Then back to his father went little Dianda and, one after another, Tangari gave him bow-strings made of wild cattle hides, *koba*-hide and elephant skin, but they all broke in turn when he tried them in his bow.

Then little Dianda said to his father: "If I am to have a bow-string which I can use, you will have to draw a sinew from the calf of your leg and give it to me." And, though it hurt, Tangari, who was fond of his boy, did as he asked, and little Dianda went away happy, for now he had a bow-string that would shoot when he went hunting.

But as he left his father, the latter called after him: "You will no doubt wish to present me with the tail of some one of the animals you slay. If so, you must promise, my son, that you will bring me the tail of a



*yboumbouni!*" And this little Dianda promised to do.

Now the *yboumbouni* is the most beautiful and powerful of all beasts. It is very, very tall and its strength is that of a hundred elephants. Its tail is long and tufted, and adorned with the whitest of *cauri*-shells and pearls of gold. And the *yboumbouni* uses its tail adorned with *cauri*-shells and pearls of gold to capture the other beasts it pursues. When it has nearly caught up with the flying animal, the *yboumbouni* suddenly turns its back on it, and snaps out its long tail. Then all its thousands of hairs, hung with pearls of gold, wind themselves around the limbs of its prey, and hold it so that it cannot move.

Little Dianda, who wanted to catch a *yboumbouni* so that he could bring his father its tail, walked for a long, long time toward the East. It is from the East that all the wonders come, and little Dianda knew that he could hope to find a *yboumbouni* only in that direction. At last he reached the great green forests in which the *yboumbouni* lived, and before he had gone very far into the forest, he came across the *yboumbouni's* mother. She was all alone, for her young ones had already gone off hunting when little Dianda arrived.

When Dianda told her the reason of his visit, the *yboumbouni's* mother said: "I am sorry one of my children must lose its tail, but a promise is a promise,

and must be kept, and you shall have what you want. I will hide you in the *canari*, the store-room where I keep my dried meat, and you must not make a sound, for if my little ones find you they will at once devour you."

So she hid little Dianda in the *canari*, and when midnight came and the *yboumbouni* were fast asleep, their mother cut off the tail of the youngest one, woke little Dianda, and gave it to him. Then the *yboumbouni's* mother told him which road to take to get out of the forest, and off he ran; for he knew he had better be on his way.

\* \* \* \* \*

Now, every morning the young *yboumbounis* when they woke up sang their morning song, beginning with the oldest. So the next morning the oldest *yboumbouni* commenced to sing, as usual:

"I must see, for it's on my mind,  
If my cattle-snare still hangs behind.  
I must see, e'er the dawn I face,  
If my cattle-snare is still in place,  
If still in place is my cattle-snare.  
Swish, swish, swish! It still is there!"

Then each of the *yboumbouni* brothers repeated the song until it came the turn of the youngest brother. And he sang:

"I must see, for it's on my mind,  
If my cattle-snare still hangs behind.  
I must see, e'er the dawn I face,  
If my cattle-snare is still in place,  
If still in place is my cattle-snare.  
Swish, swish, swish!"—

and then he broke off, for he could not swish his tail because it was missing. So he ended his song with:

"It is not there!"

Then all his brothers were very angry, and the angriest of all was the youngest brother. All of them set out and followed little Dianda's tracks, sniffing the ground as they ran. Soon they had trailed him out of the forest and had nearly caught up with him, when he turned around and saw them coming. Then little Dianda stopped and began to sing:

"O father of mine, the *yboumbouni*  
Is on his way to swallow me,  
Because his tail I promised you,  
And now I don't know what to do!"

Not one of the *yboumbounis* had ever heard a human being sing before, and little Dianda's song pleased them greatly. They stopped short, and the oldest said: "Let us go and fetch mother, so she may hear this curi-



ous creature sing!" But when they hurried back home, told their mother what they had heard, and asked her to come with them and hear the creature sing, she said: "Run back quickly and catch it and bring it here!" So the *yboumbounis* ran off again to catch little Dianda. But little Dianda had nearly reached his village by the time they caught up with him again.

So once more he faced them and sang:

"O father of mine, the *yboumbouni*  
Is on his way to swallow me,  
Because his tail I promised you,  
And now I don't know what to do!"

Then the *yboumbounis* again ran back to their mother, and a second time she sent them back to catch little Dianda. But by that time little Dianda was safe at home in his father's house, and had given his father the *yboumbouni's* tail with all its white *cauri*-shells and golden pearls.

As soon as little Dianda handed him the *yboumbouni* tail, his father, Tangari, touched the wounded place in his leg (from which he had torn the sinew for little Dianda's bow-string) with it, and it was at once healed. Then he kept the *yboumbouni's* tail as a precious *gris-gris* or talisman. Besides this, Tangari used it for a fly-flap, and it was the first fly-flap ever used by a human being. And ever after little Dianda brought

home the *yboumbouni*'s tail with its white *cauri*-shells and golden pearls, men have been in the habit of using the tails of animals for fly-flaps. Men of the western lands across the sea saw the fly-flaps made of animals' tails and made fly-flaps of other materials; but the first fly-flap came from the East—whence all the wonders come—and was made of the tail of the *yboumbouni*.

## THE STORY OF ABDULLAH OF KHORASSAN

**I**N a green valley of the fruitful province of Khorassan there once lived a peasant named Abdullah, together with his wife Zeeba and their children—Yusuf, a boy, and Fatima, a girl. Abdullah was strong and healthy and tilled the fields for the *reis* or squire on whose land his little cottage stood. In payment he received grain and cloth, and these sufficed to feed and clothe his family and himself. As for money, Abdullah did not even know what it was, never having seen any in his life.

One day, however, the *reis* was so content with Abdullah's work that he made him a present of ten *piastres*, and Abdullah was so surprised and pleased with all this wealth that he could hardly stop to thank the master. As soon as possible, he ran home to Zeeba, his wife: "See, Zeeba, the riches that have been given us!" he cried, and spread out the money before her. Zeeba was as astonished and delighted as her husband, and the children were at once called in to share their parents' joy.

"And now," said Abdullah, "the next thing is to decide what we will do with this vast sum"—for it seemed



a vast sum to him. "The *reis* has given me to-morrow for a holiday and if you approve, dear wife, I will go to the famous city of Mesched, which I have never seen, though it lies but five or six miles away. There I will pray at the shrine of the holy Imam Mehdee—upon whom be Allah's blessing!—and like a pious Mohammedan, offer two *piastres*, one-fifth of my wealth. And after that I will go to the great bazaar, and with the money that is left, dear wife, I will buy everything you and the children would like to have. So tell me what you would like best!"

Zeeba thought a moment and said: "I would rather you spent most of the money on the children, so all you need bring me is a handsome piece of silk for a dress." Sturdy little Yusuf cried: "O father, bring me a nice horse and a sword!" "And bring me," said his soft-voiced little sister Fatima, "an Indian handkerchief and a pair of golden slippers!"

"I shall bring back every single thing for which you have asked when I come home to-morrow evening," said Abdullah, and the next morning, kissing his happy family farewell, he took a stout staff in his hand and set out for Mesched.

The first thing Abdullah saw when he drew near the city were the splendid domes and minarets which encircled the holy Imam Mehdee's tomb, whose roof glittered with gold. When he entered Mesched he made straight for the shrine of the saint, and at the gate of

the mosque asked a venerable priest who was reading the Koran whether he might enter and make his offering: "Go in, my brother," said the holy man; "give your alms and you shall be rewarded. Has not one of the best of caliphs said: 'Prayer takes a man half-way to Paradise; fasting brings him to its gates; but it is charity which opens them to him!'"

When Abdullah, like a good Mohammedan, had left one-fifth of his wealth, two *piastres*, at the holy Imam's shrine, he hurried to the great bazaar. Here crowds of people filled the street, through which moved richly caparisoned horses, the splendid trains of nobles, and caravans of mules and camels; while in the rich shops were displayed all the wares of Europe, India, China, Tartary and Persia. Abdullah, pushed from side to side by those on foot, and nearly run over by those on horseback, looked about him with open mouth at everything he saw, until he was so confused that he made up his mind to finish his business at once and return to his quiet home.

So he walked into a shop in which silks were kept, and asked for one of their finest pieces. The silk-merchant, looking at his clothes, decided he was one of those rich farmers who dress very plainly, though they have plenty of money. So, thinking he had gained a good customer, he brought out his best silks, and Abdullah was so bewildered by their beauty and variety that for a long time he could make no choice.

At last he chose a piece of purple silk with a richly embroidered border. Wrapping it up and putting it under his arm, he said:

"I will take this. How much is it?"

"You are a new customer," said the merchant, "so I shall only ask you two hundred *piastres*. I would ask anyone else three or four hundred for so fine a piece of goods."

Abdullah stared, laid down the silk and cried in amazement:

"Two—hundred—*piastres*! Impossible! Do you mean *piastres* like these?" and with that he took one of his *piastres* from his pocket and held it up before the shop-keeper.

"Certainly I do," said the latter, "and it is very cheap at the price."

"Poor Zeeba," said Abdullah, sighing at the thought of her disappointment.

"Poor who?" said the silk merchant.

"My wife," answered Abdullah.

"What have I to do with your wife?" said the silk merchant, irritably; for he began to fear he was not going to make a sale.

"Ever since I was a boy," Abdullah cried, "I have worked hard for the *reis* of our village. I never saw money in my life until he gave me ten *piastres* yesterday. I came to Mesched, and after I had left two *piastres*, a fifth of my wealth, at the shrine of the holy



Imam Mehdee, the descendant of the Prophet—upon whom be Allah's blessing!—I came to the bazaar. I meant to buy a piece of silk for my wife, a pony and sword for my little boy, and an Indian handkerchief and a pair of golden slippers for my darling daughter with the other eight *piastres*. And now—you ask me two hundred *piastres* for one piece of silk!"

"Get out of my shop!" cried the angry silk merchant. "Here I have been wasting time and rumpling my finest goods for a fool and madman. Get back home to your Zeeba, and your silly children! Buy them stale cakes and black sugar and clear out of my sight!" With these words he pushed Abdullah out of the door.

"This fellow is a rascal," thought Abdullah, "but there must be some honest ~~men~~ in Mesched. I will try the horse dealers." And when he reached the horse market, and said that he wished to buy a handsome pony, twenty or more ~~were~~ at once trotted out for him to examine. After he had looked at a number, a smart little grey horse, with head and tail in the air, was led out and Abdullah, seeing Yusuf riding it in his mind's eye, hastened to ask the price.

"Not a *piastre* less than two hundred to any other person," said the dealer, "but you shall have it for one hundred and fifty!" Abdullah stepped back in surprise. "Why, you horse-dealers are as bad as the silk merchants!" Once more he repeated the story he had

already told the seller of silk, but the horse-dealer did not let him finish.

“Get along with you, you clodhopper!” he shouted. “Go back to your Zeeba and your Yusuf and your Fatima, and buy your boy the sixteenth share of a jackass! That is better suited to your means than even a hair of the tail of the fine horse at which you were looking!”

Off he went in a rage, leaving Abdullah dismayed and disheartened. “At least,” thought he, “I can buy some of the smaller things.” But the lowest-priced sword cost thirty *piastres*, the golden slippers twenty, and a small Indian handkerchief was twelve—four more *piastres* than he had.

Disgusted, Abdullah turned his steps homeward, and was almost out of the city limits when he met a poor dervish who cried: “Charity! Charity! He who lendeth to the poor lendeth to Allah, and he who lendeth to Allah shall be repaid a hundredfold!”

“What is that you say?” cried Abdullah.

And the dervish repeated: “He who lendeth to Allah shall be repaid a hundredfold!”

“You are the only person in Mesched with whom I can do business,” said the poor, simple peasant. “Take these eight *piastres*—they are all I have—and use them in Allah’s name! But see that I am repaid a hundredfold, for else I shall never be able to give my wife and

children what I have promised them." And then he told the begging dervish his story.

The holy man, smiling at Abdullah's simplicity, took his money, told him to be of good heart and rely upon a sure return, and then went his way, crying as before: "Charity! Charity! Who lendeth to Allah shall be repaid a hundredfold!"

When his wife and children saw Abdullah nearing the cottage, they all ran out to meet him. Yusuf, quite out of breath, was the first to reach his father. "Where is my horse and sword?" he cried. "And my Indian handkerchief and golden slippers?" said little Fatima, who had now come up. "And my piece of silk?" inquired Zeeba, close behind her daughter.

Abdullah shook his head to all their questions, and would not speak until he had entered his dwelling. Then he seated himself on his coarse, straw mat, and told the tale of his adventures from beginning to end. And when he told them how he had given his remaining eight *piastres* to the holy dervish who was begging, Zeeba reproached him with throwing away his money so foolishly, and was so angry and disappointed that she marched straight off to the *reis* and told him everything.

The *reis* sent for Abdullah. "Blockhead!" he said. "What have you been up to? I am a man of wealth, yet I never give more than a copper coin to these rascals who go about asking charity. And you, who have



nothing, give one of them eight *piastres*! Well, he promised you a hundredfold return, and I shall see that you get it. Seize him!" he then cried to his servants, "and give him a hundred stripes!" The order was at once obeyed, and poor Abdullah went home with a beating, without a coin in his pockets, and disgusted with silk mercers, horse-dealers, cutlers, slipper-merchants, begging dervishes, wives, children, squires and all the rest of the world.

The next morning the *reis* again sent for Abdullah—who in the meantime had forgiven his wife, kissed his children, and told them to cheer up since Allah might still show them favor—and said to him: "I have a job for you that will bring you to your senses, Abdullah! Dig here in this dry soil, and see whether you cannot find water. The water must be found, so see that you keep on digging until you strike it." Abdullah said not a word, but went to work without delay, for he was not lazy; yet though he toiled for two weary days the ground was so hard that he made little progress. But on the third day, when he had reached a depth of seven or eight feet, his spade struck a brass vessel. Looking into it he found it full of round, white stones, beautifully smooth and with a fine lustre.

He tried to break one of them with his teeth, but found he could not. "It must be some rice of the squire's which has turned into stones," said he to himself. "I am glad of it, for he is a cruel master. But

I will take them home, for they are pretty, and I remember seeing some like them for sale in Mesched. "But what is this," he added, as he drew another brass pot from the ground. "These stones are darker; they must have been wheat; but they are very beautiful. And these shining pieces of glass," he cried, as he unearthed a third pot, "are finer and brighter than all the rest. But are they glass?" He put one of them between two stones, but could not crush it.

Pleased with his discovery, and thinking he had found something of value, though he did not know what it was, he dug out all the stones he could find, and hid them in a bag which he concealed even from his wife. He planned to obtain a day's leave from his master, and go to Mesched, where he hoped to sell the pretty stones of various colors for as much money as would buy the piece of silk, the horse and sword, the slippers and the Indian handkerchief. His mind already dwelt with pleasure on the joy of his loved ones when they saw him riding home on Yusuf's horse, loaded with the other gifts. But even as he dreamt these pleasant dreams, pious Abdullah had made up his mind that the holy Imam Mehdee should receive a fifth of whatever wealth he obtained.

After some weeks of hard labor at the well, the water was found. As a result, the *reis* was in a good humor, and granted Abdullah his holiday. The latter left the little cottage before daybreak, so that no one might see

the bag he carried, and when close to Mesched hid it under the roots of a tree, first taking out two handfuls of the pretty stones. Then he went into a shop in which he had seen others like them. Would they buy stones of the same kind, he asked, pointing to them. "Certainly," said the jeweller; "have you one to sell?" "One!" said Abdullah. "I have plenty." "Plenty?" "Yes, I have a whole bagful." "A bagful? They must be common pebbles. Let me see them?" "Here they are," said Abdullah and took out a handful of the stones, the sight of which so surprised the jeweller that for some time he could not utter a word.

"Remain here a moment, my good man!" he then cried, trembling as he spoke, and hurried from the shop. In a few moments he returned with the *cadi*, or chief judge of Mesched, and some of his attendants. "There is the man!" said the jeweller, pointing to Abdullah. "I am innocent of all dealings with him. He must have found the long-lost treasure of Khosru. His pockets are filled with diamonds, rubies and pearls, whose value and lustre exceeds that of any now in existence, and he says that he has them by the bag-full!"

The *cadi* ordered that Abdullah be searched, and the jewels described were found. Then he was told to point out the place in which he had left the bag, which he at once did. The jewels in his pockets were put back in the bag again, the bag was carefully sealed, and then Abdullah was brought before the governor of



Mesched, who questioned him. Abdullah told the governor the whole story from first to last: of the gift of ten *piastres*, of his charity at the Imam Medhee's shrine, of the purchases he had meant to make, of the actions of the silk-merchant, the horse-dealer, the cutler and slipper-maker, of his wife's anger and disappointment, of the *reis's* cruelty, of the digging of the well, the discovery of the pretty stones, and his plan for selling them—not forgetting to mention the fifth of his gains he had meant to leave at the shrine of the saint. And Abdullah told his tale so clearly and simply that the governor could not doubt its truth, especially since it was confirmed by the testimony of his wife and children, who had been brought to Mesched.

Yet, in spite of all this, Abdullah, his family, and the splendid treasure he had found were sent to Ispahan a few days later, guarded by five hundred horsemen. And in advance rode couriers on swift steeds to inform the great Shah Abbas of the discovery which had been made and all connected with it:

Now, while these things were happening in Mesched something very extraordinary had taken place in Ispahan. One night the holy Imam Mehdee appeared to Shah Abbas the Great in a dream. He wore the green gown which only the descendants of the Prophet—on whom be Allah's blessing!—may wear, and, looking steadfastly at the monarch, said solemnly: "Abbas, protect and favor my friend!" The Shah, much

troubled by this dream, called on his astrologers and wise men to expound it; but they could not. On the two following nights the Imam appeared again to Abbas in his slumbers, and spoke the same words. Then Shah Abbas grew angry, and threatened the chief astrologer and the other wise men with death unless they relieved his anxiety. It was while the executioner was sharpening his sword that the couriers from the governor of Mesched arrived, and the vizier, after reading their letters, hurried to the Shah.

“Let the mind of the Refuge of the World be at ease,” he cried. “The Shah’s dream is explained! A peasant of Khorassan, named Abdullah, poor and ignorant, but pious and charitable, has become the instrument of Providence in discovering the buried treasure of the great Khosru. He is the friend of whom the holy Imam Mehdee spoke in his dream, commanding that this good and humble man be honored by the protection and favor of the king of kings.”

Shah Abbas listened to the particulars sent him from Mesched with delight. His mind was relieved, and he ordered his nobles and his army to accompany him a day’s march from Ispahan to meet the holy Imam Mehdee’s friend. When he was informed that the party from Mesched was near, the Shah walked a short distance from his tent to meet them. First came a hundred horsemen; next poor Abdullah, with his arms bound, sitting under guard on a camel; after him, on

another camel, followed Zeeba, and then came Yusuf and Fatima, riding a third. Behind the prisoners was carried the treasure. A hundred horsemen guarded each flank and two hundred covered the rear.

Shah Abbas made the camels which carried Abdullah and his family kneel down close beside him. With his own royal hands he helped untie the cords which bound the holy Mehdee's friend, while others released his wife and children. Then he ordered that Abdullah be clothed in one of his own robes, and led him to a seat beside the throne. Yet before he would agree to seat himself, Abdullah addressed the Shah as follows:

"O King of the Universe, I am a poor man! But I was content with my lot in life, and happy with my family until I knew wealth. Since then I have known nothing but disappointment and misfortune. Have me slain if you wish, but spare the lives of my dear wife and children. Let them be restored to the peace and innocence of their native valley, and deal with me according to your royal pleasure!" And as he said this, Abdullah, overcome by his feelings, burst into tears. Shah Abbas himself was moved.

"Good and pious man," he said, "I intend to honor, not to slay you. Your sincere prayers and charitable offerings at the shrine of the holy Mehdee have been approved and accepted. He has commanded me to protect and favor you. You shall spend a few days



at my capital, to recover from your fatigue, and then return to Khorassan, whence you came as a prisoner, as its governor. A wise minister, who knows the forms of office, will go with you; but in your own piety and honesty I shall find the best qualities for the governorship of a great province. Your good wife Zeeba has already received the silk robe to which she looked forward with such pleasure, and I myself," added the monarch with a smile, "will see that Yusuf gets his horse and sword, and little Fatima her Indian handkerchief and golden slippers."

The Shah's words and manner dispersed all Abdullah's fears, and his heart was filled with joy and gratitude. Shah Abbas kept his promise, and a few days later Abdullah was made governor of Khorassan, where his justice and charity soon became famous, and he did not forget to repair, beautify and enrich the shrine of the holy Imam, to whose guardian care he owed his fortune. Yusuf became a favorite of Shah Abbas, and was noted for his skill in horsemanship and his gallantry. Fatima married one of the principal nobles of the Shah's court, and good Zeeba continued to be the cherished wife of her husband, who in his new and lofty position did not forget the ties and feelings which had made him happy when he was humble and obscure.

## THE SINGING TREE, THE SPEAKING BIRD AND THE GOLDEN WATER

ONCE upon a time a king of France died, leaving three grown-up children, two boys, named Louis and René, and a daughter whose name was Marie. They lived with their mother, the queen, who had been ill for a long, long time. First, all the court doctors and then all the most famous physicians of France and of other countries had been called in to cure the queen of her illness. They had prescribed all sorts of remedies, but not one of them had succeeded in curing the evil from which she suffered. Finally, when it was clear that all the physicians could do her no good, the magicians were called in, and then the sorcerers. In vain, their wisdom was all thrown away.

One day, however, a stranger passing through the town, heard at the inn in which he was staying that the late king's widow was dying of an incurable malady. He at once asked to see the queen and said to her:

"There is but one way you can be cured, and that is by obtaining three marvelous objects now in the hands of a terrible magician in the land of the North Wind. These three things are: the Singing Tree, the Speaking

Bird and the Golden Water. The Singing Tree is a wonder-tree whose leaves give out the most heavenly music; the Speaking Bird is a great blue bird which tells all sorts of beautiful stories, night and day; and the Golden Water is a water which has the gift of curing all illnesses and putting an end to evil enchantments. Send out and obtain the Tree, the Bird and the Water, and you will be cured of your ill as soon as you have obtained them. But you must know that it is very difficult to obtain possession of them."

The queen richly rewarded the unknown who had renewed her hope of being cured, and at once took steps to send for some one to obtain the three marvelous objects of which she was in need.

She had the bravest knights in the kingdom called to court, but they were deaf to all her pleas, and not one among them would undertake so dangerous an adventure.

"If that be the case," said Louis, her oldest son, "I will set forth to find the Singing Tree, the Speaking Bird and the Golden Water. I will start to-morrow. If I have not returned in three months' time, it will be because some misfortune has overtaken me."

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The following day, mounted on the best of his father's three horses, and provided with arms and with money, Prince Louis took the road for the Land of the North Wind. Each night, when he stopped at an inn,



he asked whether he were following the right road, and each night he was told that he was.

At the end of eight days he came to a great desert plain; there was not a tree, not a house, not even a hut to be seen. All that was visible was a row of tall rocks in the distance. And, in spite of this and the fact there was not a soul in sight, he heard voices all around him laughing and saying:

"To what end, Prince Louis? You will never return from your journey! To what end? To what end?"

Impatient, the prince set off at a gallop in the direction of the row of rocks; but the voices kept following him, calling out: "To what end? To what end?"

Suddenly the prince heard the hoofbeats of another horse galloping behind him. He turned around, and there was a tall old man with a long white beard which fell down to his waist.

"What do you want of me, old man?" said the prince.

"Oh, not much. I merely wished to ask where you are going at full speed across this desert plain."

"My mother, the Queen of France, is ill and I am going to the Land of the North Wind to obtain from a cruel enchanter three things which will restore her health: the Singing Tree, the Speaking Bird and the Golden Water."

"Do you know, young man, that you have undertaken a very dangerous errand? Those rocks, there

below, are knights who, like yourself, had gone out to seek the enchanter's treasures, and whom he turned into stones. You interest me and I want to help you. So remember this bit of advice. When you reach the stone knights you will hear yourself called by name—but you must not answer. Invisible enemies will strike you, they will spit in your face, but you must not even turn your head. If you do as I tell you, you will reach the magician's treasures without coming to harm."

Prince Louis thanked the old man and rode on his way. Soon he had reached the rocks which had been pointed out to him.

"Prince Louis, Prince Louis, where are you going so gaily?" cried hundreds of voices.

The young man did not answer.

"Prince Louis, Prince Louis, where are you going so gaily?" the voices cried again, this time in a threatening manner.

Then the prince began to grow impatient. He was tempted to turn in his saddle and cry: "What business is it of yours?" But he controlled himself and said not a word.

Soon came furious cries and curses, then blows, and then his invisible foes were spitting in his face. This was too much. When he saw himself thus insulted, he a king's son, he could no longer hold in, and forgetting the old man's advice he wheeled his horse with an angry word.—

That very moment he was turned into stone, together with his steed.

\* \* \* \* \*

Three months went by and, as you may well imagine, Prince Louis did not return from the Land of the North Wind.

Then, although the queen tried to keep him from going, René, the second brother, said farewell to his mother and sister Marie, mounted the better of the two remaining horses and set out to find Louis and the magician's three marvelous treasures.

In fifteen days' time he reached the great desert plain and, just as had been the case with his brother, heard the voices rise around him.

"To what end?" they said. "To what end, Prince René?"

But he rode on and met the old man who advised him not to turn round when he reached the enchanted rocks. When he came to them he at first bore the insults heaped upon him patiently enough, but in the end could no longer control himself and, wheeling his horse, was also turned to stone like his brother.

When three months had passed and Prince René did not come back, Marie, the queen's daughter, decided to set out in her turn. In vain her mother, who now had but this one child left her, begged her not to go. Marie, in order to do her duty by the mother whom she loved found the courage to resist her ten-



derest pleadings. She took the last of the late king's horses, and, dressing herself as a country girl in order not to attract attention, she took her way to the Land of the North Wind.

At night she would stop at some farm and sleep on a pile of straw in the courtyard or stable. It cost her three weeks to reach the great desert plain.

"To what end, pretty princess? To what end do you journey? To what end? To what end?" the same voices which had spoken to her brothers called out to her.

Soon the old man met her and advised her not to turn back, no matter what happened. And Marie promised him she would not and marched bravely toward the rocks.

There she was insulted by thousands of invisible voices; she was struck, stones were cast at her and she was spat upon, but Marie paid no attention to the insults showered on her. Naturally, when she saw herself treated in such a way, like her brothers, she felt the royal blood in her veins revolt. She longed to turn on her invisible enemies and cry: "Who are you cowards who gather in such numbers to strike a woman?" But the thought of her mother, who had to be cured, gave her the strength to endure every outrage. Without a word, without a gesture, she continued on her way, and before long had left the rocks which rose at the end of the plain behind her.

Having turned into the path which led to a little wood, which she entered still seated on her horse, she again met the old man who had already given her such good advice. With an amiable smile he showed her where she could find the Singing Tree, the Talking Bird and the Golden Water.

"Here is the fountain of Golden Water," he said. "Fill your gourd with it. Then, when you are returning the way you came, and reach the enchanted rocks, throw a drop of the water on each one of them and you will be surprised what happens. As to the Speaking Bird, carry him away in his cage, which is hanging from the Singing Tree. All you need do is to cut a single branch of the tree and replant it in your mother's garden. There it will grow and thrive."

Then the old man left Marie, who hastened to cut the branch, take up the cage and fill her gourd with the Golden Water.

When she had returned to the enchanted rocks, she threw a drop of water on each of them and all the knights, lords and princes whom the magician had turned into stone regained their original form; they as well as their horses. Louis and René, blessing their little sister, hastened to bring her back to their mother again.

Before they left, however, one of the princes whom Marie had delivered from his enchantment, asked to marry her, but Marie refused him.

Thanks to the marvelous treasures she had brought back with her Marie's mother was soon cured. First of all, the wonderful tales told by the beautiful Speaking Bird distracted the queen's melancholy thoughts; then the sweet melodies of the Singing Tree, which grew in size day by day, plunged her into a refreshing slumber, peopled with delightful dreams; and, finally, owing to the virtues of the Golden Water, of which she drank a few drops every morning, she was soon restored to a state of perfect health.

Everyone said—and who could deny it—that Marie was a model of all that a good and intelligent girl should be.

A year after her return from the Land of the North Wind she married the old man whom she had met in that far country. She wished no other husband but him to whom she owed her mother's health and her brothers' salvation; and she not only was grateful to him, but she loved him as well. And, marvel of marvels, as soon as the words had been spoken which made them man and wife, the old man was transformed into a young and handsome prince, and though she had not wished for the change, Marie was happier because it had taken place, for now she knew that they would have a longer stretch of years in which to live together in peace and happiness.



## THE STINGY PEASANT AND THE BEGGAR MONK

ONCE upon a time a peasant had brought a wagon-load of pears to market. And since the pears were large and golden in color, he stood proudly in the market-place, and asked such a high price for them that none of those who passed by would buy from him. Finally a beggar monk, whose robe was torn and tattered, came up to the wagon, looked at the pears, and humbly said: "Give me one little pear!"

"For money, yes," said the peasant; "without money, no!"

"What?" said the beggar monk. "You have more than a thousand pears, and you will not give me one little pear?"

Then the peasant shouted: "You lubberly monk, get you gone!"

But others who had heard them came up and said: "Give the monk a small pear, or at any rate give him one which has begun to turn soft."

"I have no small pears nor any that have begun to turn soft," answered the peasant. "I have come here to sell the pears, and not to give them away. I have a home, and a wife and a crowd of children, who all

want to live. Give them away? How so? If I were to give away one pear, then everybody would come and ask for them. I might better become a beggar monk myself!" And the peasant did not stop scolding until, at last, a shoemaker gave him some money, bought a pear and offered it to the monk.

The monk took it, thanked him with becoming modesty, and at once began to eat it. And while he was eating and was loudly sucking in its juice with puckered mouth, he said: "I have given up the world and care nothing for its treasures. I am glad to divide what I have with everyone. I have pears as beautiful as these are, and I invite you all to eat them."

"What?" cried the people in the market-place. "You have pears yourself? Then why not eat your own?"

"There you have it," said the peasant; "that is how these fellows are!"

But the monk answered: "Before my pears can be eaten I must plant a pear seed." And when he had finished the pear he was eating, he spat out one of the seeds into his hand; and, borrowing a spade from a workman who stood beside him, dug a little hole in the ground. In this hole he laid the seed and covered it with earth. "Now," he said to one of the shopkeepers who were sitting at their midday meal, "give me a couple of spoonfuls of soup to water the seed!" At these words everybody laughed, and one of the

men, in order not to spoil the joke, brought a little soup with which to water the seed. Then all watched the spot, motionless, without drawing breath, for the seed was already sprouting. The monk pushed those who crowded about the seedling away and it was time he did so, for it was already growing into a tree, and all had to make room for it, for fear of being struck by its spreading branches. All at once, there stood the full grown tree, as high as a house. And then, as though snow had fallen, it was covered with white blossoms, and following them leaves grew and rustled in the breeze. In another moment the blossoms had already fallen, and from all the branches hung great, reddish, sweet-scented pears, so many of them that the boughs were weighed down beneath the load. The monk then climbed up into the tree and flung down all the pears he could reach; while he told the people to pluck the fruit hanging within reach themselves. And as quickly as the tree had grown and fruited, just so quickly was its fruit gathered and eaten. Then the monk climbed down, took up an axe and felled the tree, and loading it upon his shoulder as though it were nothing at all, went away as humbly as he had come. The peasant had stood on tip-toe among the others, his mouth wide open with astonishment as he watched the monk's magic, and his eyes popping out of his head with surprise. But when the people dispersed and the peasant returned to his wagon, he saw that all his



pears had disappeared. Then he realized that the pears the monk had divided had been his own pears.

Next he noticed that his wagon-pole was also gone, and could see it had just been chopped off. Full of rage, he ran after the monk, and when he came out of the city gate, there lay his wagon-pole in the grass. There were still some knobby places where branches might have grown, and a few dead leaves. And then he knew that the pear tree had been his wagon-pole. The people who had run along with him now began to laugh so loudly that instead of continuing to pursue the monk, the peasant thought it best to return quietly with his wagon-pole to his wagon, vowing to himself as he went that the next time a poor man asked him for a trifle he would give it to him.

## THE DAUGHTER OF THE MOON

**L**ONG, long ago, in the days that have passed, Kimanauetze had a son who always sat in his *kraal* and pulled a long face. "Why do you not marry?" asked his father. "Because I care for no girl in our village." "Then take one from the next village." "I do not want one from the next village." "Then go down to the sea and find one there." "I do not want any girl who lives on this earth," said the son. "What? Then where will you find one?" "The daughter of the sun and the moon is the only one I want." "But how can any one get up there?" asked his father, relatives and neighbors.

The son, however, had made up his mind. He went to the very first bird he met in the road and asked it to act as his messenger. "I dare fly no higher than the trees," said the bird, "for there the storms begin." Then the son went to the hawk. "I dare fly no higher than the hills," said the hawk, "for there the clouds begin." So then the son went to the eagle. And the eagle said, "I can fly to the clouds, but it is so cold up there that my wings begin to freeze." And with that the frog came up to the son and said to him: "Do not worry, but write a letter and I will take it up."

"Away with you!" answered the son. "If the best among birds dare not fly so high, how would you ever manage to get there?" "Never mind. Do you write the letter and I will deliver it," was the frog's answer. So the son sat down at a table and wrote a letter to the Moon Queen, asking for her daughter's hand. "I, the son of Kimanauetze, beg permission to marry your daughter." This letter he gave to the frog.

The frog went to the well, where gliding down the thin moonbeams, the maids of the Moon Queen were accustomed to come to draw water. When they dropped their water-pitcher into the well, the frog quickly slipped into it, and the maids never noticed it and carried the pitcher up with him in it. When they had set down the pitcher in the front room up above, the frog climbed out, spat the letter out of his mouth, and laid it on the edge of the table. Then he hid himself.

The Moon Queen soon found the letter. When she had read it she asked: "Who brought up this letter? Whoever wrote it dwells on earth, but I live in the heavens." And she took the letter and laid it carefully away. When evening came the frog slipped into the empty pitcher and let himself be carried down to earth. Down below he climbed out of the pitcher and at once went to the son. "Your letter has been delivered," said he. "But where is the answer?" asked the son. "Wait a bit," said the frog; "you will receive an an-



swer in due time." But when six days had gone by without an answer, the son wrote a second letter. He wrote: "I have not received an answer to my first letter. Tell me 'no' or tell me 'yes'; but it is not polite on your part to send me no answer at all." Again the frog allowed himself to be carried up, and secretly laid the second letter where he had put the first. When the Moon Queen found the second letter, she said to her maids: "Are you the ones who bring these letters along?" And the maids said: "We? Bring letters? Not at all." And now the Moon Queen wrote an answer. She wrote: "Son of Kimanauetze, you who are always writing these letters, why not first come up here and show yourself, before you expect an answer. And bring a betrothal gift with you, as is the custom." Then she laid the letter in the same place where the frog had laid his letters, and left the room. The frog took her letter, allowed himself to be carried down by the maids who did not know they were carrying him, and at once took the letter to the son.

The son at once jumped out of bed, opened the letter and read it. "So you were up above, after all," he said to the frog. And that very same night he wrote a third letter. He wrote as follows: "I am sending you herewith my betrothal gift. Pray let me know how large a wedding-gift I am to make." Then he took eight gold pieces and gave them to the frog, together with his letter. The frog said: "I will attend

to everything. But I cannot go up again until next evening, for the road is too long to travel twice the same day." And sure enough, when next she looked, the Moon Queen found the letter and the eight gold pieces on the edge of the table. When she had read the letter she told her husband, the Sun King, everything. And the Sun King was not at all angry, but said: "Prepare a good meal for the messenger who brought the letter." Then, when the Moon Queen said: "But I do not know him," the Sun King answered, "Never mind, but prepare the meal and put it on the table." So a large chicken was roasted with maize and was put on the table, together with knife, fork and spoon. Then the door was closed. And the frog came out of his hiding place, climbed up on the table and ate with the best of appetite. He even wiped off his mouth on the napkin. Then he hid himself once more. In the meantime, the Moon Queen had written her answer. She wrote: "Dear son of Kimanauetze, your letter and your betrothal gift have reached me safely. The wedding gift should be six times the amount of the betrothal gift." This letter the frog took down with him.

It took the son six days to get together so large a sum of gold, and he was worried besides as to whether the frog could carry it all up in his mouth. Yet the frog managed to do so, though his jaws ached. With the wedding gift the son sent a letter, in which he

wrote: "Here is the wedding gift. Before long I myself will come to fetch my bride." The moon-maidens were surprised that day to find how heavy their water-pitcher was. This time a whole pig had been roasted for the frog, and it took him a long time to make away with it, though finally he managed to do so. When he reached earth again, however, he felt too heavy and tired to hunt up the son that same night. Instead, he crept between some thick leaves and had a good sleep.

The following morning, though it was nearer noon, when he went to the son, the latter was already impatiently waiting for him in the middle of the road. "The wedding gift was duly delivered to those whom I visited," said the frog, "but now you yourself must set the day on which you will call for your wife." "Very well," said the son, and let ten days go by. At the end of that time the son came to the well and said: "Frog, I need some one to fetch the bride down for me. But I can find no one to do it. Every one tells me: 'I cannot get to the sky.' So what am I to do?" "Do not worry," answered the frog; "that is my affair." "But how will you manage to bring me the bride? That will be too much for you." "Do not trouble trouble," replied the frog; "and do not think so meanly of my ability. I will manage it." "Very well," said the son; "then I shall let you try it."

That very same evening the frog had himself car-



ried up and at once went to the room in which the Moon Queen's daughter lay sleeping. For the first time he saw what a beautiful girl she was, and that her like had never yet been seen on earth. Then he spoke some magic words and deprived her of her sight so that when she woke the next morning she would not be able to see. The following day every one on the moon had long been up and about their work, only the Moon Queen's daughter was missing. "Where is the daughter?" everybody asked. So her mother went to her and said: "Why don't you get up? There is more than usual to do about the house to-day." And the daughter answered: "Mother, my eyes are closed and I cannot see." Then her father, the Sun King, sent two men to ask the soothsayer for his advice. The men did not tell the soothsayer why they had come nor what had happened; but he rolled his magic dice and then said: "There is some one sick. It is a woman who is sick. And it is her eyes which are sick." And then the men said: "So it is." Then the soothsayer rolled his magic dice again and said: "The sick woman is unmarried. Her bridegroom has laid a spell on her. His spell says: 'Send me my bride, else she will die!'" So the men went back to the Sun King and told him what the soothsayer had advised. And the Sun King said: "We will sleep one night on it. Then, to-morrow, she shall go down to earth." The frog now

quickly slipped into the pitcher, let himself be carried down to earth and hurried to the son as fast as his short legs would carry him, crying: "Hallo! To-morrow your bride will arrive! Prepare everything for her coming!" And then, for he did not believe him, the son beat the frog and shouted: "Away with you! I never want to see your face again, teller of untruths!" The frog answered not a word, but went to the well, and there hid himself.

The following evening the daughter of the Moon Queen came down the path of the moonbeams to earth, followed by many maidens who carried her rich garments and golden jewels. And the maidens wept and could not make up their minds to leave their mistress. But the daughter of the Moon Queen was quite happy, and beckoned up to them a long time after they had gone. Not until she stood there quite alone by the well, and her maidens had climbed high into the sky, so that she could no longer hear them, did she grow frightened. The rustling of the trees, something she had never heard on the moon, increased her terror. And she heard no step of the bridegroom who was to come to fetch her, and no voice greeted her. She had already opened her mouth to call her mother like a little child when she felt something on her foot, and heard a voice saying: "It is I, the frog! I will lead you to your husband!" And at the same time he said the magic spell he already had





“The following evening the daughter of The Moon  
Queen came down the path of The Moonbeams”

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spoken backwards and she could see again. She saw him and saw the trees and the radiance of the moon and went along with the frog. The son's *kraal* was locked and fastened, and all were asleep. "Knock!" said the frog. So the daughter of the Moon Queen knocked. "Who is there?" cried the son. "Your wife," answered the frog. And with that the son opened the door and came swiftly out, and looked at the bride and she at him. They had only eyes for each other. "Go to the well to-morrow and gather all the rich garments and the gold you will find there," called out the frog and went away.

But the son and the Moon Queen's daughter only looked at each other and went into the house, hand in hand. And the son was completely covered by the silver radiance which streamed out from his wife.

The next morning all the people in the village stood on tip-toes and looked in through the window at the Moon Queen's daughter. But she only laughed happily at them, called out a few words in a foreign tongue, and hid her hands beneath her dress because they shone so.

## THE WEB OF LIFE

ONE day Ali ben Hassan, the vizier of the mighty Caliph Abdallah, was walking in the outskirts of Bagdad. From morning on that day, one thing after another had happened to vex him. To begin with, he had not slept well. Next, his oldest son Nouredin, who had left the house the night before, had returned home at dawn shamefully intoxicated, against the Prophet's wise law, which forbids the use of wine and other fermented beverages. Again, the servant who always accompanied his daughter Amina to the baths, had informed him that for the fifth time in succession, a young man had passed them as though by accident and that Amina, while he was passing, had pretended to arrange her veil and managed to show her charming face to the unknown. In so doing she had offended one of the first rules of Mohammedan good behaviour.

All these things had made Ali feel out of sorts. And then, when he went to the council of state, to wait on the Caliph Abdallah, the latter had received him coldly. A short time before a revolt had broken out in a nearby province. Ali had repressed it with much vigor, without letting the Caliph know anything about



it; for he did not wish to disturb his royal master. But some of Ali's enemies had told the Caliph, and the latter now angrily blamed his vizier; first, for having allowed the revolt to occur in his kingdom; secondly, for having hidden it from him; and thirdly, for having repressed it by force instead of diplomacy. When Ali left the council-chamber he was very unhappy because—something which makes every statesman grieve—he felt that his credit had been weakened.

No sooner did he reach home than his wife began to scold him. He did not let her have enough money to clothe herself properly, said she. The wife of the governor of the Caliph's palace went about in much better clothes than she did, and, in fact, she actually did not have a thing to wear. Ali bowed his head beneath the storm of her complaints, and told the servants to bring on his dinner. He hoped that a good meal would make him forget his private and public annoyances. But, unfortunately, this happened to be the very day when the cook had cooked nothing but dishes which Ali did not like.

Desperate, Ali hurried from the house, left the city, and walked out into the country. "There are days," he murmured to himself as he went along, "that tempt one to put an end to one's self. Life seems enough to drive a man mad at times!"

The hot sun burned down on the highway the vizier had followed, and before long he was seized by an ir-

resistible desire to find a shady spot in which to rest. After looking about for a while, he found a narrow path whose winding course promised to lead him to some cool and quiet place, and before long he came to a ruined mud-wall, above which rose a palm-tree. Ali gave a sigh of satisfaction and sat down against the wall, in the shade of the broad palm-leaves. No doubt he would at once have fallen asleep had he not been disturbed by a monotonous buzzing. The vizier looked first to one side and then to the other, and soon beheld a glittering green and gold fly circling above his head. Now, Ali was longing for the peace which comes with slumber, so he shooed away the fly once or twice with his hand; but the obstinate insect kept returning, and at last impudently settled down on Ali's nose.

This was too much. Ali shook himself briskly and struck a vigorous blow at his enemy without hitting him. But the fly, in its hasty flight, did not notice that it was headed straight for the web which a large spider had spun between an angle of the wall and the trunk of the palm-tree. As the fly blundered into the web, the vizier could not help but feel satisfied, and muttered through his teeth:

"Now I think you will let me sleep for a while, you vexatious fly!"

Then, his eyes still fixed on the green and gold fly, he saw a monstrous spider come out of the crack in the mud-wall. It had a belly as large as a man's

thumb, and its legs were long, black and hairy. The spider drew near its victim and began to strengthen the web near the fly, which was beating about in a frenzy of terror. In fact, the fly made such desperate efforts to rid itself of its bonds, that Ali could not help but pity its hopeless struggle. Though very weary, he did not wish to see his little enemy perish in so sad a manner. Rising, he frightened off the spider, and then released the fly from the web.

“And now I hope you will let me alone,” he said as he opened his fingers and allowed the insect to make its escape.

The fly spread its wings and Ali soon lost sight of it. Then he returned to lie down once more in the shade of the palm, closed his eyes and fell into a deep slumber. He was awakened by a voice calling him by name, and, opening his eyes, saw standing before him a being of radiant beauty and gigantic size. From the shoulders of this creature spread two transparent, gossamer wings. Ali knew at once he was in the presence of a *djinn*.

“Vizier,” said the *djinn*, “you have done me a real service. I was the fly which was buzzing around your head a short time ago. I had assumed the shape of a fly in order to drop my ordinary greatness for a brief space, and fly about freely in the sunlight. A wicked magician, an enemy of mine, turned himself into the spider in the web on the chance of catching me. I



would not have escaped from him had it not been for your help. For you must know that, though we have the power to assume the shape of all living creatures, when we do so we run the same risks that they do. And when we are in danger we only can be saved by the help of man. You were kind enough to come to my aid, and as a return for your kindness you may ask a favor. I will grant any wish you may choose to make."

For a moment Ali did not speak; then he said:

"Only an hour ago I was thinking that it is not worth while living a long life, because of the annoyances which spoil so many days of our existence. For this reason, it would be much better if we did not live so long. If it be within your power to do so, I shall ask you to do away with every day of sorrow in the years I still have to live. Let me live only those days which are truly tranquil and happy. If this is agreeable to you, you will have returned the favor I did you a hundredfold."

When he had listened to Ali's wish, the *djinn* smiled in a mysterious manner and said to the vizier:

"Have you thought over this wish carefully?"

"Yes," answered Ali.

"Then let it be as you wish!"

At once the *djinn* seized the vizier by the waist, and raised him so high that he lost his senses. When he regained consciousness, he found himself lying on his

bed, in his house in Bagdad, with his body so cold and helpless that he could not make the slightest movement. His eyes were closed; yet in spite of this he could see all that was going on about him, and hear all that was said in the room, which was filled with people. There were his wife, his children and his servants, and all were shedding tears, and lamenting the loss of so good a husband, so good a father, so kind a master, and so faithful and noble a friend.

And Ali thought, "Is it possible that I am dead?"

"Yes," answered the *djinn*, who appeared at the foot of the bed, visible to no one in the room save Ali alone, whose thoughts he read.

"Treacherous spirit," thought the vizier. "Is this the way you keep your promise?"

"Do not accuse me," replied the *djinn*, "but blame your own stupidity for what has happened. Why did you ask me for the impossible? Two fairies are charged with weaving the destinies of men. At the beginning of all things, a mountain of white wool was piled up before one of the fairies, with which to spin the lucky days, and a mountain of black wool before the other, with which to spin the unlucky days. But one night, while the fairies were asleep, the evil one came along, and amused himself for a while turning the two mountains of wool upside down and mixing them together. The result was that when the fairies woke up, they found it impossible to separate the white

from the black wool. From that time on they have had to spin the days with the threads of the two colors mixed, and this is the reason why the days of life are made up of joys and sorrows. Think back on your life, and tell me whether there is a single day on which you have not had some joy, no matter how small! When you asked me to cut out of your life all the days on which you would suffer some disappointment, you really asked me to cut off your days altogether, for the only day that makes you free from all trouble on earth is the day of your death. I am sorry I had to give you this lesson, but you asked for it yourself."

"Unfortunately your lesson will be of no use to me now," said Ali, "because I have died."

The *djinn* smiled and answered:

"I am a kind-hearted creature. If you want, we will take for granted that you never told me your wish. I will take you back to the place in which I found you, and not a thing in your life will be changed. What do you say? Will you accept my proposal?"

"Nothing would please me better," replied the vizier.

The *djinn* took Ali in his arms and everything about him disappeared from sight as he lost consciousness for the second time. When he once more opened his eyes, he was lying against the mud wall, in the shade of the palm-tree beneath which he had fallen asleep.



Rising, he asked himself whether his adventure had really happened or whether it had merely been a dream, and, full of thought, took his way back to his home.

When he entered the house the first thing that Ali heard was that his son Nouredin had been so sick as a result of his over-indulgence, that he had vowed by the beard of the Prophet never again to drink anything but water. Furthermore, he learned that the young man who had met his daughter so often on her way to and from the baths was the son of one of the richest and most influential merchants of Bagdad, and that he had formally asked for Amina's hand in marriage. In addition, the vizier found waiting for him a letter from his master, the Caliph Abdallah. It told Ali that after due consideration the Caliph had decided that his conduct with regard to the revolt had been prudent and energetic, and assured him that he stood higher than ever in the royal favor. Finally, his wife had paid a visit to the governor of the palace, and her own eyes had convinced her that the latter's dress was a perfect fright. As a result, she was in a state of high good humor. Even the cook had made good his neglect of the morning, and Ali was served with a delightful meal, made up of all his favorite dishes.

Thus ended, in the happiest way imaginable, a day which had begun in the most unlucky manner, and

Ali, when he went to bed, admitted to himself, with a smile, that the *djinn*—whether real or only a figure in a dream—had given him a lesson in wisdom which he would never forget.

## FLORISEL AND MELIANDE

ONCE upon a time, long, long, long ago, there lived a king who had an only son named Florisel. And Florisel, the king's son, was brought up with a little orphan girl, who had once been found in the forest, and whose name was Meliande. All day long the children played together in a great green meadow, picking costmary-flowers and pansies, blowing the silver fluff from the dandelions, and winding chains of their stems. And Meliande played she was the mother, and baked little cakes of moist sand in a thimble. Meliande had a sweet voice, too, and there was one song she always sang when Florisel grew tired of play, and laid his head in her lap. Then she would wind one of his long blond curls around her finger and sing:

Over the grass the soft winds blow,  
No clouds the sky are hiding;  
See, on a horse as white as snow,  
A little prince comes riding!

Clover, grass and marguerite,  
Forget-me-not and buttercup,  
Bachelor's-button, meadowsweet,  
See the white horse gobble up!



Farmer runs a-hurry-foot,  
Alas, alack! Alack, alas!  
Between the shafts white horse is put,  
Though he'd rather gobble grass.

But coachman wears a coat of gold  
That sparkles where the sun it hits;  
Beside him on the box, behold,  
A really, truly princess sits!

When they grew older, Florisel was taught to ride and to use the sword, and Meliande had to learn spinning, sewing, to play the lute and other womanly arts; so they did not see as much of each other as they had. Yet they had it all settled between them that some time, when they were altogether grown up, they would marry each other.

Now, it happened one day that a stranger knight came to the court of the old king, Florisel's father, who told many tales of foreign lands and brave deeds he had done in them. And his stories so excited Florisel that he made up his mind to put on his little suit of armor and mount his pony, and ride out into the world to try and do some brave deeds himself, seeing that his ancestors had all been very worthy knights and gentlemen. Since he felt sure that his father would not let him ride out into the world seeking adventures, because he was still so young, he made up his mind to say nothing of his plan to any one, save

Meliande, whom he meant to bid good-by and ask for a keepsake.

The greatest adventure of all, so it seemed to him, would be to do battle with the Old Man of the Mountain and overcome him, for it was the Old Man of the Mountain of whom the stranger knight had told the most wonderful tales. He had said that the Old Man of the Mountain was a pagan who thought he could do as best pleased him in all things. And in order to prove it and at the same time carry out his evil designs, he lured young men to his castle. Once there, he led them to the highest peak of his mountain into a beautiful garden full of wonders, a garden surrounded by a high wall. There he gave them a certain drink which caused them to fall into a deep sleep. In this sleep they dreamed the most wonderful things, and it seemed to them that these things really happened, and were not a dream. And their dream was so mixed and mingled with the wonders of the garden that, indeed, none could tell what was unreal and what was real.

The dream, too, was always the same: the youth dreamed he was walking in an enchanted garden, beneath strange and unknown trees, whose fragrant blossoms hung down above his head. Then he would come to an open meadow of the greenest grass, in the midst of which sat beautifully robed maidens who received him with sweet songs and the silver music of

strings. When he drew near they rose, and their princess, who wore a glittering crown on her forehead, would lead him to the company. Then the hours would pass to the sound of music, while he ate delicious foods and drank snow-cooled sherbets, and the maidens waited on him until he thought himself in Paradise itself, served by the angels. But suddenly, in the midst of all these delights, a cloud would cover the sky, and then all would disappear from sight, the youth would feel himself carried off, and when he opened his eyes again he would be lying on a couch in a bare room.

Since the youths whom he misled thought that these dreams were really true, and believed the deceitful Old Man of the Mountain, who told them that his garden was indeed the garden of paradise, to which he held the key and to which he could admit whom he chose, they fell completely into his power. The pleasures of the garden were so great that they grew sad with longing for them, and no longer had any will of their own. Whatever the wicked Old Man of the Mountain told them to do they did; because then he promised to let them into his paradise again. And thus he made them commit the most evil deeds one could imagine.

It was this evil Old Man of the Mountain whom Florisel meant to ride out against, and fight and do



away with, for the world would have been a better place without him.

So according to his plan he said farewell to Meliande, told her what he meant to do, and hurried away in secret. Yet he encountered so many dangers, hindrances and adventures, that he lost time on the way and reached the land of the Old Man of the Mountain much later than he had expected, and than he had told Meliande he would. For he had planned everything very carefully, and had told Meliande when he left her exactly when he would return. Now, when the time he had set had passed, and he did not come, Meliande thought that some misfortune must have happened to him in his encounter with the Old Man; and because she loved him she wanted to help him. For this reason she found courage to disguise herself as a youth and follow after him. When she left the house she never looked around, for she was afraid her heart might fail her if she saw the window of her little bedroom, where flowers grew in pots. And in due time she came to the castle of the Old Man of the Mountain, and reached it the very day that Florisel himself arrived.

Now, in order to be well received by the Old Man of the Mountain, Meliande had hit upon the following plan: In his treasure chamber the old king, Florisel's father, together with many other precious

things, kept a skin with the feathers of a bird which had come from Paradise. For it happens that these birds which live in Paradise sometimes fly too high in the air, are blown by adverse winds from their course, and do not find their way back to their home again. Then, when they sink down wearied to earth, they are caught by hunters and their skins are sold to rich kings. They are sold to rich kings because they are the most glorious things ever seen, for their infinitely fine and delicate feathers show every color known, and gleam like the stars. Besides, as a sign that the bird truly comes from Paradise, it has no feet, for in the heavenly gardens it floats ever in the air, and is nourished by the rich fragrance which streams from the flowers growing there.

It was the skin of such a bird that Florisel's father, the old king, had in his vaulted treasure chamber, and when Meliande set out on her journey she secretly took the skin with her, intending to win the favor of the evil Old Man of the Mountain with the gift, and knowing that Florisel's father would not regret it if it were to help his son. So, when she was led before the Old Man, she laid the precious skin at his feet and told him the story of the bird.

And when the evil old magician saw these precious and wonderful feathers, which were not of this world, and whose very sight was a blessing, he was greatly frightened and cried: "Now I see that in truth there

is but one Paradise, and One God who has created it, and that I am accursed forever because of my evil deeds!" With that he tore his garments in his fear and grief. But Meliande, when she saw him weak and helpless, boldly asked where Florisel might be, and the Old Man told her he had led him into the garden but a few hours before, and had given him the sleeping draught. Then Meliande tore the key to the garden from his hand and hurried off to find Florisel.

In the garden the song of many birds rose and fell, and a fragrance breathed which filled the heart with longing. From high columns hung great bunches of ripening grapes, and blossoms were opening on the branches of low-growing bushes. The ground was covered with smooth, bright-green grass, in which bloomed strange red flowers. Meliande was hardly able to breathe, all was so strange, yet she went on bravely.

Before long she found Florisel. He was sleeping under a quiet tree with broad, spreading leaves. His left hand lay on his breast, and she could see him breathing quietly and evenly. She cried aloud in her great joy, and kissed him; but his face never moved, and he continued sleeping. Then her heart was seized with a sudden fear and she grasped his hand to raise him up, but his hand lay limp in her own. And when she called him loudly by name, a blissful smile crossed his face; yet Meliande knew that he was dreaming of



the Old Man's false Paradise. Then the tears of her heart crowded to her eyes, and fell in great drops on Florisel's face. And for a long time she bent over him, knowing he was dreaming of the vain delights of the Old Man's Paradise, until it seemed as though her heart would break. But then she stopped, wiped the tears from her eyes, sat up again and began to sing the song she used to sing when they had played as children in the green, flowery meadow:

Over the grass the soft winds blow,  
 No clouds the sky are hiding;  
 See, on a horse as white as snow,  
 A little prince comes riding!

Clover, grass and marguerite,  
 Forget-me-not and buttercup,  
 Bachelor's-button, meadowsweet,  
 See the white horse gobble up!

Farmer runs a-hurry-foot,  
 Alas, alack! Alack, alas!  
 Between the shafts white horse is put,  
 Though he'd rather gobble grass.

But coachman wears a coat of gold  
 That sparkles where the sun it hits;  
 Beside him on the box, behold,  
 A really, truly princess sits!

And when Meliande had finished her song, lo and behold, Florisel sat up and opened his eyes wide! He recognized Meliande and kissed her, and both were happier than happy. Then Florisel began to feel ashamed to think that his brave plan of fighting the Old Man had come to such a sorry end; and that he had yielded to his arts and gone into his dream-garden. But Meliande comforted him. It had happened because he was still too young for such an undertaking, said she, and in a few years' time he would make good his failure. And this Florisel vowed to do.

And now that they were so happy, they told each other all that was in their hearts, and made many plans for the future. Their hopes were like a little birch tree sprouting in the spring, pushing its way through the earth and brown leaves that covered it through the winter months. First two little shoots peep above the ground, delighting in the bright sun, the spring birds and the merry winds. The weather keeps growing finer and fairer, the last snows melt away, the earth turns green, colored flowers spring up, the butterflies come out and the little tree stretches itself. Then, with the sun shining warmly on its heart, the first pair of real birch leaves bud out: they look just like those on a large tree. And when the tiny birch sees its tall brothers moving slightly in the wind, their smooth stems rising to the skies, the sun shining through the

green leaves of the upper branches, it stretches itself higher and higher, full of hope and happiness.

Thus it was that the hopes of Meliande and Florisel grew and flourished. Then, suddenly, above their heads a golden sunray fell on a great, dark, ox-heart cherry hanging from the tree. Meliande rose and picked it and held it between her teeth, and Florisel kissed her and at the same time bit off half the cherry as children often do in play. But this was a magic cherry, like all the lovely fruits in the Old Man's garden. And as Florisel and Meliande each swallowed half of the cherry their eyes closed, and they passed to those wonderful gardens where the birds of Paradise float above flowers whose fragrance never grows less. Hardly aware that they had done so, they passed from the highest moment of earthly happiness, which cannot last, into a happiness which knew no end.



## THE BEARDED DWARF

MANY hundreds of years ago there lived in an unknown land a king who had a daughter of incomparable beauty, whom his people, because of the admiration they felt for her charm and the sweetness of her disposition, had named Radiant Star, a name which seemed to fit her so exactly that she was never called by any other. As might have been expected, many powerful princes aspired to gain her hand in marriage; but the princess, though she treated them all with great courtesy, could choose but one among them, and the one she chose was Prince Constance. When the king had given his consent, the two lovers set out one fine May morning with a splendid suite for the church where the wedding was to be celebrated.

A number of princes whom Radiant Star had rejected had already sadly returned to their distant kingdoms, but one powerful suitor, named Bulfstroll, had not gone off with the rest. He was a dwarf in stature, with a great hump on his back and a beard more than five feet long, a man wicked beyond all telling. He had remained behind because, willy-nilly, he had de-

terminated to gain possession of the princess, by fair means or foul.

He was a magician, and in order to carry out his evil design he turned himself into a windmill at the very moment the wedding procession arrived at the church door, where, whirling around rapidly, he filled the air with a blinding dust. While every one was for the moment deprived of sight, and was trying to rub the dust out of his eyes, he seized Radiant Star and carried her up to the clouds, from which, in a short time, he descended to his subterranean palace. There he left the princess, who had lost consciousness, on a sofa.

When the princess regained her senses, she found herself in a large, splendidly furnished chamber, evidently one of the rooms in a great palace, as she could see as soon as she was able to rise and examine her surroundings.

Soon she noticed that an invisible hand had shoved a table covered with plates of gold and silver filled with the most appetizing dishes in front of her, and in spite of her annoyance she could not help but taste them. So good did they taste that she kept on eating until she had completely satisfied her hunger. Then she lay down and tried to sleep. But her eyes would not close, for she kept looking at the glowing golden dishes on the table, the magnificent furniture and everything else the room contained. Before long the door

opened, and four negroes entered carrying a throne of gold and precious stones on their shoulders, on which sat the hunchbacked dwarf with the five-foot beard.

Bulfstroll descended from his throne, and, drawing near the sofa, tried to kiss the princess' hand. But she gave him such a tremendous box on the ears that he staggered and saw stars, and his ears rang till he heard the chiming of thousands of little bells. The dwarf could not suppress a cry, so loud and terrible that the whole palace trembled. But not wishing to show the princess how angry he was, he at once turned his back on her to march off again. Unfortunately, his feet caught in his long beard, and as he moved his body to one side in order not to lose his balance and fall, a little cap, which had the gift of making its wearer invisible, dropped from his hand without his noticing it. The negroes now ran up to support their master, and having once more seated him upon the throne, all hastily retired.

As soon as the princess was rid of them, she rose from the sofa, shot the bolt of the door and then, moved by a sudden fancy, put on the little cap and stepped over to a mirror to see how she looked in it. Imagine her surprise at finding that the mirror did not reflect her image! She took off the cap and looked once more into the mirror, and then realized why she had not seen herself the first time. So she put on the magic



cap and walked around the room, very well satisfied with herself.

A short time after the door flew violently open, and the dwarf with his inconvenient beard flung over his shoulder, so that it would not trip him when walking, entered. As he could see neither the princess nor the cap which he had lost, he knew what must have happened, and began to grope in every corner of the room and feel of all the furniture, even raising the cushions on the sofa. While he devoted himself to this vain search, the princess, invisible, thanks to the little cap, left the palace and took refuge in the garden, which was very beautiful and so large that it seemed endless.

There she lived peacefully, eating the delicious fruits that grew on the trees and bushes, drinking pure water from a spring, and laughing at the helpless rage of the dwarf, who never gave over hunting for her. Sometimes she would amuse herself by throwing plumpits at him, or by taking off the cap for a moment to tantalize him and mock him to his face.

One day when she was enjoying herself in this way, the cap caught in the thorny branches of a cluster of currant-bushes, and the dwarf took advantage of the opportunity to catch her. He was about to seize the cap as well when the air resounded with the war-like blasts of a trumpet.

Uttering a thousand curses and trembling with rage,

he released the princess, instantly casting her into a deep slumber by means of his magic arts, and drawing his two-edged sword, rose up to the clouds in order to plunge down upon whichever person had provoked him, and kill him with a single blow of his weapon.

But before we go any further, let us leave him in the clouds, and return to the moment when the princess had been carried off by the dwarf in front of the church door.

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The whirlwind of dust which had thrown the wedding procession into confusion caused a great tumult, and when it was over, the father of Radiant Star and Prince Constance looked for her everywhere, calling her by name, until the king, realizing that all his efforts were vain, issued a proclamation promising to accept as his son-in-law and give half his kingdom to the man who found his daughter, and brought her safely home again. Without losing a moment, all the young princes who hoped to gain the prize mounted their horses and galloped off in every direction.

Prince Constance, who also sallied forth to search for his betrothed, rode for three days and three nights without stopping to eat, drink or sleep, until well along in the afternoon of the third day, tired out, he halted his horse in a green meadow and dismounted with the intention of taking a few moments' rest. But no

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sooner had his foot left the stirrup than the most pitiful cries reached his ear, and he saw before him a poor rabbit in whose back an owl of tremendous size had sunk its claws. The prince at once picked up something which he thought was a stone (in reality it was a skull), and flung it with such skill that he killed the owl. Delivered of its enemy, the rabbit ran to the prince and after having turned various somersaults in order to show its gratitude, went its way. And then the skull which the prince had flung at the owl spoke as follows:

“I must thank you, Prince Constance, for the service you have done me! I once belonged to an unfortunate man who was guilty of many crimes, and was condemned to roll about in the dust until that day when I could find some way of saving the life of one of God’s creatures. For more than seven hundred and seventy years I have been rolling around in the dust, and in all that time not a single human being has paid the slightest attention to me. You have delivered me from the penance imposed on me for my crimes, by helping me save that poor rabbit, and to prove my gratitude for the favor you have done me, I will show you how to call a magic horse which belonged to me while I was alive, and which will help you in a thousand ways. When you want the horse, all you need do is to stand in a field and, with your eyes turned neither to the right nor to the left, speak the following words:



“ ‘Marvelous steed,  
    With mane of gold,  
To my call give heed  
    And do as you’re told.  
On noiseless hoof  
    Me with you bear  
’Neath the sky’s blue roof,  
    Like a bird in air!’

“And now complete your charitable action by burying me here, so that I may repose in peace; and continue on your way in the hope of seeing success crown your undertaking!”

The prince dug a hole at the foot of a tree, and, saying a prayer, piously buried the skull. When he had cast in the last handful of earth, he saw a blue flame come out of the ground. This was the soul of the dead man, rising to the skies, happy at being released from its long penance on earth.

The prince then walked to an open field, taking care to turn his eyes neither to the right nor to the left, and in order to try out the spell the skull had given him, cried in a loud voice:

“Marvelous steed,  
    With mane of gold,  
To my call give heed  
    And do as you’re told.

On noiseless hoof  
Me with you bear  
'Neath the sky's blue roof,  
Like a bird in air!"

At once, amid lightnings and thunders, there stood a horse, swift as the wind, with a gleaming coat and a mane of gold. Flames shot from its eyes and nostrils, and smoke rose from its mouth and ears. Stopping before the prince, it said with a human voice:

"What are your orders, Prince Constance?"

"I am very unfortunate and am in need of your aid," answered the prince. And he told it of the misfortune which weighed upon him.

"Creep into my left ear and come out again through my right," said the magic horse.

The prince did as the horse had told him, and came out from its right ear splendidly armed. The breastplate of his coat-of-mail was adorned with gold and precious stones, his helmet was of gleaming steel, and he held a sword and a mace in his hands. Not only was he perfectly equipped as a warrior, but he was also filled with superhuman strength and valor. He stamped on the ground and the earth trembled beneath his foot; he swung his sword through the air and the leaves fell from the trees as though a storm had passed. Then he said to his horse:

"Where shall I go? What shall I do?"

And the magic horse replied :

“Your betrothed, the Princess Radiant Star, has been stolen by a dwarf with a hump on his back and a beard more than five feet long. He is a powerful magician who lives not very far from here, and you will have to make his acquaintance. But the only weapon which can injure him is the sword with trenchant blade owned by his brother, the giant with the big head and the basilisk eyes. So we first will have to look him up.”

Then Prince Constance leaped fearlessly on the back of the horse with the mane of gold, and the latter at once began to run furiously, leaping over high mountains, sailing across broad rivers in the twinkling of an eye, and rushing through the densest forests without bruising a single blade of grass or raising the smallest cloud of dust on the highway. Finally they came to a wide plain covered with human bones, at the foot of a mountain which quivered and shook. There the horse stopped and said :

“This mountain which you see before you, Prince, is the head of the giant with the basilisk eyes. You must be careful not to look at him face to face, for his glance is deadly, and if it struck you would put an end to you as it has to those whose bones lie at our feet. Fortunately, the monster has fallen asleep owing to the heat of the mid-day sun, and by his side is lying the sword with trenchant blade which none can resist.



Hide yourself and stretch out on my neck until we are near the sword, and then stoop and seize it quickly. Once it is in your hands you have nothing further to fear, for not alone can the monster do you harm, but you will have him completely at your mercy."

The horse then silently drew near the sleeping monster, and the prince leaned over without dismounting, and after having seized the sword, uttered a great cry to awaken the giant. The latter suddenly raised his head, clove the air with a large and angry sigh, and turned his flaming eyes toward the prince. But when he saw the sword with trenchant blade in his hands, he swallowed his wrath and said:

"Have you decided to give up your life by coming here?"

"Speak a little less haughtily," answered the prince, "for you are in my power. Your basilisk eyes have lost their magic, and you shall perish by the sword. But first I should like to know who you are."

"I cannot deny that I am in your power, Prince," answered the monster, "but show yourself generous, for I am deserving of pity. I am one of the giant race, and were it not for the hatefulness of my brother, I could have lived a happy life. My brother is Bulfstroll, a dwarf with a great hump and a beard more than five feet long. Envious of my size and shape, he used every means to injure me. He owes his prodigious strength to his beard, and this beard of his can

only be cut by the sword with trenchant blade which had been buried by a magician, an enemy of ours, and which is the only weapon that can destroy us. Bulfstroll told me of this, and, fool that I was, believing what he said, I took an oak-tree, made a shovel of it, and dug in the mountain until I found the sword. Then a dispute arose between my brother and myself as to which of us should have the sword, until finally my brother said: 'Let us put our ears to the ground, and the first who hears the bells ring in the nearest church-tower shall have the sword!' I lay down to listen, and as soon as I did so, my brother flung himself upon me, and with a traitorous blow of the sword separated my head from my body, and left the latter unburied, so that it might change into an enormous mountain covered with trees and bushes.

"As to my head, since it had been gifted with a power that made it impossible for him to destroy it, it has remained in this spot, to kill with fright all those who before you came trying to obtain the sword with trenchant blade. And now I beg of you, O victorious prince, to use this magic weapon to cut off the beard of my treacherous brother! If you do this, you will at one and the same time have destroyed his evil power, and have paid him back for what he has done to me."

"I can promise that your wish will soon be granted," said the prince, and at once ordered the horse with the golden mane to take him to Bulfstroll's palace.

No sooner had he given the order than he found himself at the gate of the garden, at the very moment when the dwarf was persecuting the Princess Radiant Star. The sound of the war trumpet had made Bulfstroll stop, but before he left he put the cap on the princess' head in order to make her invisible.

The prince was still awaiting a reply to his summons when he heard a rumbling up among the clouds. This was the dwarf, who had risen to a tremendous height with the intention of dropping with crushing force on his enemy below. Yet he so grossly miscalculated the distance when he flung himself down from the clouds that he struck the ground and sank into it up to his waist. Naturally he was thus at the mercy of the prince, who instantly seized his beard and cut it off with the sword with trenchant blade.

After having attached the dwarf's beard to his helmet as though it were a plume, and having tied him up and slung him across his horse's saddle, Prince Constance entered the palace, whose servants opened all the doors when they saw in his possession the beard which had held them in slavery for so long a time.

The prince at once began to hunt for the princess; but in vain he examined every corner of the palace and of the garden, for the malicious dwarf refused to help him. Finally, when he was nearly desperate, he was lucky enough to touch the magic cap, and taking it up, saw the princess asleep as the dwarf had left



her. Not being able to waken her, he put the magic cap in his pocket, and, with the maiden in his arms, mounted the horse with the mane of gold and took the dwarf to the place where lay the head of his brother the monster. The head at once swallowed him, not without uttering a great cry of satisfaction.

Prince Constance then remounted his horse, and soon reached the broad plain, where the horse stopped and said:

“Prince, here we will separate! From this place it is only a day’s journey to the city where the princess’ father reigns. Your own horse is waiting here for you. Farewell! And now, before you leave me, crawl into my right ear and come out through my left one!”

The prince did as he was told, and coming out found himself clad in the wedding garments he had worn when the princess had been stolen away by the dwarf. Then the horse swift as the wind, with the mane of gold, disappeared and, when he called it, his own horse came galloping up from the opposite side of the plain.

Night having fallen by this time, the prince laid the sleeping princess on the ground, and after having covered her carefully with his mantle so that she could not catch cold, lay down to rest himself.

As bad luck would have it, one of the suitors whom the princess had refused happened to come that way, and when he saw Prince Constance lying there asleep,

he thrust him though with his sword, and fled away with the princess, whom he brought to the palace of the king, her father, saying:

“Here is your daughter, whose hand I demand in marriage in accordance with your promise! She had been stolen by a terrible magician, with whom I had to fight three days and three nights before I could get the better of him.”

His daughter's return filled the king with joy; but when he saw that all his caresses failed to waken her, he grew much alarmed and asked the youth who had brought her back what this strange slumber could mean.

“I have not the slightest idea why the princess continues to sleep,” answered the impostor. “She is just as she was when I found her near the magician's bronze castle.”

While these things were happening in the palace, Prince Constance, thrust through by the sword of his treacherous rival, had barely strength enough left to murmur:

“Marvelous steed,  
 With mane of gold,  
 To my call give heed  
 And do as you're told.  
 On noiseless hoof  
 Me with you bear  
 'Neath the sky's blue roof,  
 Like a bird in air!”

A moment later, stepping out of a luminous cloud, the magic horse stood beside him and as soon as it saw what had happened to the prince, bounded off to the fountain of life, from which it brought back three kinds of water: the water which revives, the water which cures, and the water which lends strength. With these in turn the horse bathed the prince's pale forehead. When the first kind of water was applied to his brow, life returned to the prince's cold body, and his blood once more began to circulate through his veins; when he felt the second kind of water on his face, his wound was healed at once; and the third kind of water immediately caused him to regain his strength. Then he opened his eyes and cried:

"Ah, what a tranquil and refreshing sleep I have had!"

"The sleep you were enjoying was the sleep eternal," answered the horse with the golden mane. "One of your rivals who found you sleeping, assassinated you and carried off the Princess Radiant Star to her father, telling him that he himself had rescued her. But never mind. The princess is still sleeping, and you are the only one who can break her enchanted slumbers, by touching her with the dwarf's beard. Mount your horse and hasten to the palace!"

When he had said this the magic horse again disappeared in a whirlwind of light and Prince Con-



stance, mounting his horse, rode like the wind in the direction of the palace of Radiant Star's father.

When he came to the outskirts of the city, however, he found it besieged by an enemy army, which had already captured a portion of the wall, and was at the point of putting the terrified inhabitants to the sword. As soon as he saw this, the prince put on the cap which made him invisible, and, taking the sword with trenchant blade in his hands, he fell on the besiegers with such irresistible energy that those who were not killed ran away, glad to escape with their lives. When this great deed had been done, the prince, still invisible, hastened to the palace, where he heard the king express his astonishment at the enemy's sudden and unexpected flight.

"Who could have been the valiant warrior that saved us?" the king asked, filled with surprise.

No one answered. Then Prince Constance removed his magic cap and, kneeling before the king, said:

"It was I, king and father, who had the good fortune to vanquish our enemies, and who rescued the princess, my betrothed, from the terrible danger in which she found herself. I was bringing her back to your arms, when this rival of mine, here present, stabbed me while I lay asleep, and afterwards deceived you by pretending to have been her rescuer. Lead me to the side of Radiant Star and I will awaken her!"

When he heard these words, the impostor ran away

as though the evil one were after him, while Prince Constance hurried to the sleeping maiden to touch her forehead with the dwarf's beard. No sooner had he done so than she opened her eyes and smiled as though she had awakened from a pleasant dream.

Overjoyed, the king covered her with caresses, and that same afternoon she was married to Prince Constance and he received half the kingdom, according to the promise the king had made.

And what shall we say of the festivities which followed the wedding? Nothing more than that eyes have not seen nor ears heard greater magnificence or greater rejoicing than took place on that occasion.

## THE SHEPHERD BOY'S DREAM

ONCE upon a time there was a peasant who was poorer than poor. He was the herdsman of a little village, where he had lived for many years with his wife and his only child, a boy. When his son was still very young, he had commenced taking him with him into the meadows to teach him all that a faithful shepherd should know. So it happened that when the boy grew older, his father was able to let him tend the sheep alone, while he earned a few shillings more by weaving rush baskets.

Every day the little shepherd boy drove his flock out over the hills and dales, whistling or singing many a merry tune, and cracking his long shepherd whip, so that time never lay heavy on his hands. When the noon hour came he would lie down comfortably near his sheep, eat his hard bread and drink water from a spring. And then he would take a little nap until it was time to drive the flock on again.

Now, one day the shepherd boy had lain down beneath a shady tree in the noon hour and fallen asleep, and while he slept he dreamt a curious dream. It seemed to him that he travelled away, a long, long distance; and that there was a loud clinking, as though





“And there stood a throne on which he seated himself, while a beautiful girl sat down beside him”



a great number of gold pieces were continually falling to the ground; and then he heard thunder as though muskets were being fired without a break; and then he saw an endless number of soldiers, with gleaming swords and armor. And all these noises and sights sounded and circled about him. Meanwhile he kept on wandering and climbing up-hill, until at last he came to the very top of a mountain. And there stood a throne on which he seated himself, while a beautiful girl, who suddenly appeared from nowhere, sat down beside him in the place which remained vacant. And then in his dream the shepherd boy rose and said in a very serious and solemn tone of voice: "I am the King of Spain!" And that very moment he woke up.

As he herded his flock he kept thinking of the strange dream. In the evening when he returned home he told his parents, who were sitting before the cottage door cutting rushes, all about the curious dream he had dreamt and ended by saying: "I've made up my mind, if I dream the same dream again, to go away to Spain and see whether I do not get to be king, after all!" "Silly boy," murmured his old father, "you become a king? Every one will laugh at you!" And his mother laughed and laughed and clapped her hands, and repeated again and again: "King of Spain! King of Spain!"

The next day at noon the shepherd boy stretched himself out under the same tree in good season and,



wonder of wonders, he once more dreamed the self-same dream! He could hardly wait for evening to come to drive his sheep back from pasture, for he wanted to run straight home and start out for Spain. When he at last had driven back his flock he told how he had dreamed the dream a second time and said: "If I dream the dream again I shall set out that very minute, that very, self-same minute!"

So the third day he once more lay down beneath the same tree, and the same dream came to him a third time. Again he rose up in his sleep and said: "I am the King of Spain!" and awoke. This time he at once gathered up his cap, whip and bread-wallet, drove together the sheep, and hurried to the village. There the people began to scold him for driving the sheep home so long before the vesper-bell had sounded; but the boy was so excited that he paid no attention either to them or to his own parents. Instead, he gathered together the clothes he wore on Sundays, tied them up in a little bundle which he hung over his shoulder from a walnut cudgel and wandered off without aye, yes or no. In fact, he ran as though he expected to reach Spain before night. Yet he got no farther that day than a great wood. There was not a house or a village to be seen anywhere, so he decided to spend the night in the forest, hidden in a thick bush. No sooner had he lain down to rest, however, than a noise awakened him. A band of men talking loudly were

passing the bush in which he lay hidden. Softly the boy got up and followed after them, at a little distance, thinking that perhaps he might still find an inn, for he was sure that wherever these men slept that night, there he could sleep as well.

They had not gone very far before they came to a good-sized house which stood in the middle of the dark forest. The men knocked, the door was opened, and when they entered the shepherd boy slipped in with them without being seen. Inside the house a second door was now opened, and all stepped into a large, sparsely lighted room, its floor covered with straw bundles, mattresses and bed covers, on which the men evidently expected to sleep. The little shepherd boy quickly slipped under a bundle of straw lying near the door, pricked up his ears, and began to listen from his hiding-place to all that was said.

Before long he discovered—for he was bright and intelligent—that these men belonged to a robber band whose captain was the master of the house. When all the other members of the band had seated themselves comfortably on the straw and mattresses, the captain climbed a raised seat and said in a deep bass voice: “My brave comrades, report what work you have done this day, whom you have stopped, and what you have captured!” The first to rise was a long man with a beard as black as coal, who replied: “Dear captain! This morning early I robbed a rich noble-

man of his leather breeches. These breeches have two pockets and as often as they are turned upside-down and given a good shaking, a little pile of gold ducats falls on the floor." "That is well," said the captain. Now a second man stood up and reported: "I stole a general's three-cornered hat to-day. This hat, whenever it is turned around on the wearer's head, shoots from all three corners without stopping." "That also is well," said the captain. Then a third man rose and said: "To-day I stole a sword from a knight. As often as the point of the sword is thrust into the ground, a regiment of soldiers instantly pops up and stands there in rank and file." "That was a brave deed," said the captain. Finally a fourth robber rose: "I drew off the boots of a sleeping traveller," said he, "and anyone who puts them on can cover seven miles with every step." "A quick deed is a good deed," answered the captain. "Now hang your booty on the wall, eat and drink, and then go to sleep." With that he left the room and the robbers, after eating and drinking a while, soon fell fast asleep. When all was quiet save for the snoring of the sleeping robbers, the shepherd boy came out from under his bundle of straw, got into the leather breeches, put on the three-cornered hat, took the sword, stepped into the boots, and then softly stole from the house. As soon as he got outside the boots began to show their magic power, to the shepherd boy's great joy, and before so very long he was



walking into the great city in which the Spanish king resided. Its name was Madrid.

Here he asked the first chance passer-by whom he met in the street to direct him to the finest inn in town. But the man answered: "You little ragamuffin, you should go where people of your own sort stop and not where the rich gentlemen eat!" Yet a shining gold piece soon taught him politeness, and he at once offered to guide the shepherd boy to the finest inn in town. When he had found it, the youth rented the handsomest room, and inquired of the inn-keeper: "Well, how are things in Madrid? What is the news of the town?" Then the inn-keeper pulled a long face and answered: "You must be a stranger in this country, young sir. It seems that you have not heard that His Majesty, our king, is gathering an army of twenty thousand men. You see, we have enemies, for alas, we live in evil times! Young sir, do you think of joining the army?" "Indeed I do," cried the shepherd boy, and his youthful face shone with joy.

As soon as the inn-keeper had left him he quickly took off his leather breeches, shook a heap of gold ducats out of the pockets, and bought costly clothes, weapons, jewels, and everything he needed, and then asked the king to grant him an audience. When he came to the castle, two chamberlains led him into a high, magnificent hall, where he saw a most lovely young lady. She returned the bow which the hand-

some youth who was walking between the two chamberlains made her, and they whispered: "That is the princess, the king's daughter!" The shepherd boy had been much surprised and greatly delighted by the young princess's beauty, and his delight and enthusiasm made it possible for him to speak bravely and boldly to the king. Said he: "Your Royal Majesty, I herewith humbly offer you my services as a soldier. The army which I shall bring you will win you the victory, and shall conquer whomever you order conquered. But one reward I must ask in case I am victorious, and that is the honor of leading home your lovely daughter as my wife. Will you promise me this, my lord king?" Then the king said: "Be it so, I agree to your condition. If you return a victor I will appoint you my successor on the throne and give you my daughter's hand in marriage."

So then the former shepherd lad went out into the fields all by himself, and began to thrust his sword into the earth, here, there and everywhere. A few minutes later he was surrounded by thousands and thousands of soldiers, all ready for battle, while the shepherd boy, splendidly armed and adorned as their general, rode a magnificent charger, hung with gold-embroidered saddle-cloths, and with a bridle glittering with precious stones. Then the young general rode forth with his army to meet the foe. There was a terrible and bloody battle; but the general's three-

cornered hat never stopped firing its deadly shots; and the magic sword kept calling one regiment after another from the ground; until in a few hours' time the enemy was totally defeated and scattered, and the standards of victory waved in the air. The victor followed the fleeing foe and took the best part of his country away from him. Covered with glory he then returned to Spain, where the greatest joy of all now awaited him. The king's lovely daughter had been as much delighted with the handsome youth whom she had met in her father's hall, as he had been with her; and the king, who appreciated the great services the shepherd boy had done him, kept his word, gave him his daughter for wife, and appointed him his successor and the heir to the throne.

The wedding was celebrated with pomp and splendor and the former shepherd boy had become fortune's favorite. Soon after the wedding the old king laid crown and scepter into his son-in-law's hands, and the latter sat proudly on his throne, together with his beautiful wife, while the people did homage to him as the new king. Then it was that he thought of his dream, which had come true, and of his poor parents. When once more he was alone with his wife, he said to her: "Dearest, my parents are still living, but they are very poor. My father, a village shepherd, dwells far from here, and I myself herded the sheep while a boy, until a wonderful dream made clear to me that I was to be-



come the King of Spain. Fortune favored me and behold, now I am king! But I should like to see my parents happy, too, and so, with your consent, I will go home and fetch them back here with me." The queen was well content to have it so, and her husband, seeing that he wore the seven-mile boots, did not take long to reach his native village. On the way he returned the magic articles which the robbers had stolen to their rightful owners, with the exception of the owner of the seven-mile boots, to whom he gave a duchy to console him for their loss. Then he fetched back his poor parents, who were quite beside themselves with joy, to Madrid, where he lived in great content and happiness all his days as King of Spain.

## THE PRINCESS WHO TURNED INTO RAW COTTON

ONCE upon a time, it may have been a thousand years ago, there lived a king and a queen who had an only daughter, whom they loved more than anything else in the world. So when the king of France asked her hand in marriage, neither her father nor her mother wished to lose her, and said to the French ambassador:

“The princess is still very young!” which was a polite way of saying “No.” Now the princess grew more beautiful day by day, and the year after the ambassador of France had been turned away, the ambassador of Spain asked her hand in marriage for his king. But once more her parents replied:

“The princess is still very young!”

Now both kings were very angry because their requests had not been granted, so they determined to make the poor princess (who had had nothing at all to do with it) regret that they had been refused. Since they were either singly or together too stupid to find a way of doing this, they called in a magician and said to him:

“You must cast some kind of a magic spell on the princess. And the more annoying the spell is to her the greater the reward you will receive.”

So the magician promised the two monarchs that their wish would be granted within a month's time, and took himself off. And sure enough, before four weeks had passed, the magician turned up again at the king of Spain's castle.

"Here is the spell, Your Majesty," he said. "Deliver this ring to the princess as a gift, and when she has worn it twenty-four hours on her ring-finger see what happens!"

The two kings at once fell to discussing the best way of getting the ring into the hands of the princess. They could not send it to her parents, for her parents knew how they felt, and would suspect with cause any gift sent their daughter by her disgruntled suitors. What were they to do?"

Then the king of Spain had an idea, something which happened very seldom. "Now I know! Now I know!" he cried excitedly. And he at once disguised himself as a jeweller, set out for the city in which the princess lived, and established himself in a shop opposite the royal palace. There the queen saw him from her balcony, and as it happened that she wanted to buy some jewels, she had the jeweller brought to the palace.

When she had bought several bracelets, chains and pendants she said to her daughter:

"Would you like to have any of these pretty things, my child?"



"I do not see a single thing I like," answered the princess.

No sooner had she uttered these words than the pretended jeweller drew a ring from his pocket, where he had kept it hidden until that moment, and letting it sparkle in the sunlight, said:

"This is really a very rare jewel, Royal Highness! It is a ring that has not its equal in the world. Do you not like it?"

"Yes, indeed! What radiance! What beauty! It seems to be filled with stars!" cried the princess in an ecstasy. "How much does it cost?"

"I cannot set a price on it. I will be quite content with whatever your Highness chooses to give for it."

So the jeweller was paid a large quantity of gold and withdrew. Then the princess slipped the ring on her finger, and so great was its radiance that she could not keep her eyes from it. But twenty-four hours had not passed before the poor princess suddenly gave a terrible cry of anguish.

"Ay! Ay! Ay!" she wailed, and her shrieks resounded through the sleeping palace.

The king and queen, the ladies and lords of the court, all ran up with lighted candles in their hands, pale with fright, to find out what had happened. But when they drew near, the princess' cries redoubled. "Take away the candles! Take them away!" she

screamed in desperation. "Don't you see that I have turned into raw cotton!"

And, in fact, her entire body *had* suddenly turned into raw cotton. The king and queen were inconsolable at the misfortune which had overtaken their daughter. All the wisest men in the kingdom were sent for to discuss what had best be done in so unheard-of a case.

They deliberated a long, long time and then said: "Your Majesty should send out heralds to every country to proclaim that you will give your daughter's hand in marriage to whoever can cure her."

So the heralds rode forth, with drummers and trumpeters, through their own land and through other kingdoms, crying:

"Oyez! Oyez! Oyez! Be it known to one and all, that whoever can restore the princess to health will receive her hand in marriage!"

Now in those days a shoemaker's son lived in a certain little town. The cupboard was always bare in his home, and once when there was not a bit of bread left in the house and father and son were near starving to death, the youth said to his father:

"Father, give me your blessing! I am going to wander out into the world and seek my fortune."

"May heaven protect you, my son," said his father. And with that the youth cut himself a stout cudgel and started out on his way.

As he was walking through the fields that lay on the outskirts of the town he happened across a band of boys who were plaguing a poor little toad and flinging stones at it.

"What harm has the poor little beast ever done you?" he asked. "Did not God make it as well as ourselves? Let it be!" he cried indignantly.

And when he saw that the naughty little boys paid no attention to his words and kept on flinging stones, he ran to them, caught up one or two, laid them across his knee, and used the flat of his hand where it would do the most good. While the little rascals all ran off the toad improved the opportunity, and hid away in a crevice in a wall.

The youth went on his way, and before long the sound of drums and trumpets came to his ear. He listened attentively, and distinctly heard the following words:

"Oyez! Oyez! Oyez! Be it known to one and all, that whoever can restore the princess to health will receive her hand in marriage!"

"What is the matter with the princess?" asked the youth of someone who chanced to be passing along the road.

"What, don't you know?" was the answer. "She has turned into raw cotton." The youth thanked the man for the information and went on. When night fell he had reached the edge of a great barren plain, and



decided to lie down and go to sleep. Before he did so he turned back to look at the road he had followed, and suddenly a tall, beautiful woman stepped up to him.

He was about to leap back and hide when the woman said:

"Do not be frightened. I am a fairy and have come to thank you."

"Thank me? What for?" asked the youth, very much surprised.

"For saving my life. It is my fate to be a toad by day and a fairy by night. And now I am at your service to aid you in any way within my power."

"Good fairy," answered the youth, "I have just heard that the princess has turned into raw cotton, and that whoever can cure her will obtain her hand in marriage. Tell me how I can cure her."

Said the fairy: "Take this sword in your hand, and go straight ahead until you reach a thick wood, full of snakes and wild beasts. Do not be afraid of them, however, but go bravely on until you come to the magician's palace. When you get there, call out three times before the gate." And with that the fairy went on giving the youth directions as to what he was to do. "If you need me at any time," she concluded, "come back to this spot at the same hour and you will find me waiting."

The fairy then held out her white hand to the youth,

bade him farewell, and disappeared before he could open his mouth to thank her.

Without a moment's hesitation the shoemaker's son hurried along as the fairy had told him to, and before very long reached the thick wood inhabited by snakes and wild beasts, which filled the air with their awful cries, and gnashed their terrible teeth, and opened their hungry jaws. Yet, for all that his heart trembled within him, the poor youth went straight ahead, acting as though he did not see the savage creatures, and finally reached the magician's palace, where he called out three times before the gate. At once a voice from the interior of the castle said:

"Woe to you, presumptuous wretch! How dare you seek me out! What do you want?"

"If you are a magician, come out and fight with me!" replied the youth.

Furious at such audacity, the magician at once rushed out, armed to the teeth, and ready to slay the offender. But as soon as he saw the sword the youth held in his hand, he began to lament in the most lamentable way, and falling on his knees, he trembled and said:

"Woe to me! How unlucky I am! At any rate do not take my life!"

Then the youth replied:

"I will let you live if you deliver the princess from her enchantment." The magician at once drew a little ring from his purse and said:

"Take this ring, slip it on the little finger of the princess' left hand, and she will at once be well again."

Pleased with the success of his trip, the youth hastened to the king to convince him of the truth of what he had told him.

"Tell me, Your Majesty, is it certain that if I restore your daughter's health that I will become your son-in-law?"

"Absolutely," said the anxious king.

"Very well, then, I am prepared to cure her!"

The princess was now led in, and all the ladies and all the gentlemen of the court surrounded her to see the miracle performed. But no sooner had the youth slipped the ring the magician had given him on the little finger of her left hand, than the princess was suddenly enveloped in flames and began to utter the most heart-rending cries. All crowded about her in the greatest confusion, and the horrified youth took advantage of the fact to run away as though the evil one himself were after him.

His only wish was to return and see the fairy, and he never stopped running until he had reached the place where she had appeared to him for the first time.

"Fairy, are you here?" he cried in a trembling voice.

"Here I am," she answered and there she was. Then he told her all about the misfortune which had occurred.

"You allowed the magician to deceive you. Take





"Fairy, are you here?" he cried in a trembling voice.





this dagger and hunt him up once more. And see to it that he does not deceive you a second time." Then she added some further good advice regarding his dangerous trip through the wood and dismissed him with her blessing.

The youth came to the gate of the magician's palace and called three times. And, as before, the magician shouted:

"Woe to you, presumptuous wretch! What do you want?"

"If you are the magician, come out and fight me!"

The magician, armed to the teeth, and filled with rage, rushed out; but when he saw the dagger he fell trembling to his knees, and begged in a lamentable tone of voice:

"Spare my life!"

"You wicked magician," cried the angry youth, "you deceived me! Now I shall chain you up until you release the princess from the spell you have cast on her."

He put him in chains, and then stuck the dagger into the ground and thrust it through the chain so that the magician could not move.

"You are more powerful than I am, as well I see," said the magician, his teeth chattering like castanets. "Take the ring which she bought of the jeweller from the princess' hand and the spell will be raised."

Until he had made certain that the princess had



escaped from the flames with only a few slight burns on her hands, thanks to the swiftness with which the fire had been put out, the youth did not have the courage to present himself before the king.

"I beg Your Majesty's pardon," he said, when he returned to the palace. "The cause of the disaster was not myself, but a traitorous magician. Yet now I have totally overcome him, and my remedy will show results. All I need to do is to draw from your daughter's hand the ring she bought of the jeweller."

And this he did. As soon as he had drawn the ring from her finger, the princess was once more in all respects as she had been before, but—her tongue, her eyes and her ears were missing! No one could describe the youth's horror and surprise at this new disaster. Once more he hurried back to his friend the fairy and asked her to help him.

"You have let yourself be deceived a second time," said she. And once more she told him what to do.

When the youth returned to the place where he had left the magician he cried furiously:

"Wretched impostor! My patience is at an end. Now I shall take an eye for an eye, a tongue for a tongue and an ear for an ear!"

And as he said this he seized the magician as though he were about to strangle him. But the magician, when he saw himself in danger of death, called out:

“Have mercy! Have mercy! Let me live! Go and see my sisters, who live a little further on!” And he told the youth how to find their dwellings, and taught him the magic words to say before each gate.

In the course of a few hours the youth reached the gate of another palace, exactly like the magician’s in every respect. He called out and a voice answered from within:

“Who are you and what do you want?”

“I want the little golden horn.”

“I see that my brother has sent you. What does he want of me?”

“He wants a scrap of red cloth to mend a hole in his cap.”

“There it is! And now get out!” came a woman’s voice in haughty tones from within the palace. And at the same time a scrap of blood-red cloth cut in the shape of a tongue was flung out to the youth.

Then the youth went on for another couple of hours, and came to the foot of a high mountain. In a spur of the rocks stood another palace, exactly like the two others in every respect. The youth called out before the gate and a voice from within said:

“Who are you and what do you want?”

“I want the little golden hour-hand.”

“Very well. I see that my brother has sent you. What does he want of me?”

"He wants two beans for his soup."

"How silly! Here they are! And now get out at once!"

With that the owner of the palace flung out the two beans wrapped in a bit of paper and closed the window.

Last of all the youth came to a great plain, in the middle of which stood a fourth palace exactly like the other three in every respect. When he called and had been asked what he wanted he answered:

"I want a little foot."

"Ah, my brother has sent you! What does he want of me?"

"He needs two snail-shells for supper."

"There they are! And now stop bothering me!" answered an unpleasant female voice from a window, and at the same time the two snail-shells were flung at his feet.

Then the youth returned to the magician with the objects he had collected and said to him:

"Here are the things for which you asked."

Then the magician told him how to make use of the three things; but as he turned to go, the captive asked the youth in a pleading tone:

"Are you going to leave me tied up here?"

"It is only what you deserve. However, I will let you go now. But woe to you if you have deceived me this time!"



After having unchained the magician, the youth hastened to see the king, and as soon as he stood beside the princess, he opened her mouth, put in the scrap of blood-red cloth and at once she had her tongue again.

Alas, the very first words that came from the princess' lips were the following:

"You wretched botcher, get out of my sight!"

The poor youth was struck motionless by so grievous a surprise and murmured to himself:

"This is another of the false magician's tricks." Yet the ingratitude of the princess did not prevent him from wishing to finish his good work. He took the two beans and placed them in the girl's empty sockets, and she at once recovered her sight. But no sooner had her eyes fallen on the youth than she covered her face with her hands and cried in disgust:

"Oh, what homely creatures men are! What horribly homely creatures!"

By this time the poor youth had entirely lost heart, and he could only murmur to himself again:

"Another of the false magician's tricks!"

Yet he did not wish to leave his work unfinished. So he took the empty snail-shells and carefully placed them against the princess' head in the place where the ears ought to be, and marvelous to relate, the maiden at once recovered her tiny little ears.

Then the youth turned to the king and said;

"Your Majesty, now I am your son-in-law!"

But when she heard these words, the princess commenced to weep like a child, saying:

"He has just called me a witch! He said I was an old witch!"

This ingratitude was more than the youth could stand and without another word he ran from the palace in search of the good fairy.

"Fairy, where are you?" he called, trembling with rage and grief.

"Here I am!" Then he told her how badly the princess, whom he had restored to health, had treated him. But this time the fairy smiled and said:

"Most likely you forgot to draw the other ring from the little princess' left hand."

"That's true!" cried the youth, putting his hands to his head in his surprise. "I never thought of it in all the confusion!"

So the youth flew back to the princess and drew the magic ring from the little finger of her left hand. As he did so an amiable smile hovered around the princess' beautiful mouth, and she thanked him in a voice so sweet and kind that the youth blushed with joy and embarrassment.

Then the king said to the princess with great solemnity:

"This is your husband!"

And the youth and the princess joined hands and saluted all those present. A few days later the wedding was celebrated, and needless to say they lived happily ever after.



# THE TALE OF THE THREE SISTERS

## I

### *The Count's Three Adventures*

ONCE upon a time there was a very rich count, who threw away his money right and left. He lived like a king, and kept open table every day. Any one who came to his castle, whether knight or squire, he treated like a prince three days in succession, and all his guests were so well filled when the time came to go that they found it hard to leave. The count was fond of games of chance; his court was filled with golden-locked pages, runners and haiducks in rich liveries; and his stables were crowded with countless horses and hunting dogs. Living in such a way, it was not strange that his treasures disappeared. Soon he had to mortgage one town and village after another, sell his jewels and silver, dismiss his attendants, and shoot his dogs. At last there was nothing left of all he possessed but an old hunting castle in the forest, a good, kind wife, and three beautiful daughters.

In this hunting castle the count lived, forgotten by the world; while the countess and her daughters kept house and prepared the meals, and seeing they did not know much about cooking, the only dish that came

on the table was boiled potatoes. These frugal meals were not at all to the count's taste. He grew peevish and out of sorts, and would rear and tear about the house till the walls echoed his scolding. One fine summer morning he felt so hateful that he seized his hunting spear, and went into the forest to kill a bit of game in order to have a tasty dinner.

This forest was supposed to be haunted. Many a wanderer had lost his way among the trees and had never been seen again, either because he had been strangled by evil gnomes or torn to pieces by wild beasts. But the count did not believe these stories and feared no hidden powers. He climbed sturdily over hill and dale, and crept through bush and thicket without bird or beast coming his way. At last he grew tired, sat down under a tall oak-tree, took out a few cold boiled potatoes and a little salt from his game-bag, and decided to eat his lunch. And happening to raise his eyes, lo and behold!—there was a savage wild bear walking up to him. The poor count shuddered at the sight. He could not run away, and he was not prepared for a bear hunt, but in his despair he caught up his hunting spear to defend himself as well as he could. Meanwhile the monster came nearer, and suddenly stood directly in front of him and growled—the count could hear the words quite plainly—“Robber, you have been plundering my honey tree? You shall pay for the crime with your life!”

"Alas," begged the count, "do not eat me up, Sir Bear! I have no desire to rob your honey tree, for I am an honest knight. If you feel hungry, take potluck with me and be my guest." And with these words he presented all his cold boiled potatoes to the bear on his hunting cap. But the bear scorned what the count had to offer and growled unwillingly: "Miserable wretch, you cannot ransom your life with cold boiled potatoes! Promise me your oldest daughter Wulfild for a bride. If you do not, then I will eat you up."

Terrified as he was, the count probably would have promised the bear all three of his daughters, and his wife into the bargain, had he asked for them, for necessity knows no law. "She shall be yours, Sir Bear!" he said at once, and began to recover from his fright. "On condition, however," he added, deceitfully, "that you come and fetch the bride yourself, and bring a dower for her, as is the custom of the country." "Agreed," said the bear, "here is my hand on it!" and stretched out his hairy paw. "In seven days I will bring you a dower of a hundred pounds of gold, and take home my bride." "Agreed," said the count, "I'll be as good as my word!"

Then they parted the best of friends; the bear trotting off to his cave, the count hurriedly making his way out of the enchanted forest, and reaching his castle by starlight, weary and worn.

Now you might as well know that a bear who talks



and acts like a sensible human being, is never a natural, honest-to-goodness bear, but an enchanted one. This the count knew very well; but he thought he could lock himself up so carefully in his hunting castle that it would be impossible for the bear to enter when he came to fetch his bride at the time mentioned. "Even though he be a magic bear," said the count to himself, "yet he is a bear for all that, and besides, he has all the bad points a natural bear would have. Hence he will not be able to fly like a bird, or slip into a locked room through the keyhole, like a ghost." The following day he told his wife and daughters about his adventure in the forest. Wulfild at once fainted when she heard she was to marry a horrible bear; her mother wrung her hands and cried loudly; and her sisters trembled with grief and horror. But their father the count went out, looked to the walls and moats around the castle, saw to it that the iron gate was barred and bolted, had the drawbridge raised and every entrance barricaded, and finally climbed the watch-tower. There, directly under the battlements, was a small, thickly walled chamber, and here he locked in Wulfild, who tore her silken, flaxy hair, and seemed to be trying to weep her heavenly blue eyes out of her head.

Six days had passed and the seventh was just dawning, when a great noise rose in the forest, as though the wild huntsmen were underway. Whips cracked, post-horns blared, horses trotted, wheels rattled. A splendid

coach of state, surrounded by horsemen, rolled over the green meadow in front of the castle. All the bolts drew out of their locks of their own accord, the castle gate flew open, the drawbridge fell. A young prince as handsome as the day stepped out of the coach, dressed in silver brocades and satins. A golden chain in which a man could stand upright three times over, was wound around his neck; a string of pearls and diamonds which blinded the eye ran about his hat; and the clasp holding his ostrich plume in place was worth a duchy. He flew up the winding stairs to the tower like a storm, and a moment later the terrified bride was trembling in his arms as he came down again.

All this noise awoke the count from his morning sleep. He raised his bedroom window, and when he saw the courtyard filled with horses and coaches, knights and serving-men, and his daughter lifted into the carriage on a stranger's arm as the procession passed through the gate, his heart misgave him and he lamented loudly: "Farewell, little daughter of mine! Farewell, you unhappy bride!" Wulfild recognized her father's voice, and waving her white handkerchief from the window of the coach thus bade him adieu.

Both parents were very much upset by the loss of their daughter, and looked at each other without saying a word. Her mother could not trust her eyes, and thinking all she had seen was illusion and witchcraft, took her bunch of keys, ran up to the tower, and opened

the door of the small chamber. But there was not a trace of her daughter; though a silver key lay on the table. This she took, and as she peered through the little window, she saw a cloud of dust whirl up in the east, and heard the noise and shouting of the bridal procession until it reached the entrance of the forest. Sadly she descended the stairs, dressed in mourning, strewed ashes on her head, and wept for three days in succession, the count and her other daughters adding their tears to hers. On the fourth day the count left the house of mourning to get a breath of fresh air, and as he crossed the court, there stood a great ebony chest, well locked and fastened and very heavy to lift. He had a good idea of what was in it. The countess gave him the silver key, he unlocked it, and sure enough it contained a hundred pounds of gold, all in dubloons of the same minting. Pleased with his find, he forgot his heart's sorrow, bought horses and hawks, as well as fine clothes for his wife and daughters, engaged servants, and once more began to spend and squander until the last dubloon had flown out of the chest. Then he made debts, and soon his debtors came in crowds to the castle, plundered it from cellar to attic, and left him nothing but an old hawk. Again the poor countess had to return to the kitchen with her daughters, while the count, consumed with disappointment and bored to death, wandered all day long through the fields with his hawk.



One day he cast the bird, which rose high into the air, and would not return to his fist, no matter how much he lured it. The count following its flight across the plain as well as he could, at last saw it make for the horrible forest into which he no longer dared venture, and gave up all hope of catching his feathered companion. Suddenly a great eagle rose over the forest and followed the hawk, and the latter, as soon as it caught sight of its powerful enemy, at once darted back like an arrow to its master, to seek protection. But the eagle shot down from the upper air, grasped the count's shoulder with one of its mighty claws, and with the other crushed the poor hawk. The alarmed count tried to rid himself of the feathered monster by thrusting and beating at it with his hunting spear. The eagle, however, seized the spear, broke it like a reed and screamed the following words into his ear: "Daring wretch! Why have you let your hawk fly in my hunting-ground? You shall pay for the crime with your life!"

Seeing that the bird could talk, the count now knew the kind of an adventure he was in for. He regained his courage and said: "Gently, Sir Eagle, gently! What have I done to you? My hawk has suffered for its offence. I will give it up to you, and wish you the best of appetite." "No," answered the eagle, "I feel like eating human flesh to-day, and you look like a fat meal to me!" "Forgive me, Sir Eagle," then cried

the count, fearing he would be killed, "tell me what you want of me and I will give it to you, but spare my life!" "Very well," replied the murderous bird, "I shall take you at your word. You have two beautiful daughters. If you promise that Adelheid shall marry me, I will let you go in peace and pay a dower of two hundredweights of gold. I shall come to fetch my bride in seven weeks' time." With that the monster rose high in the air and disappeared in the clouds.

In case of need we are apt to promise away the best that we have. When their father saw that this business of marrying off his daughters had such satisfactory results, he resigned himself to his loss. This time he came home in excellent spirits, and said not a word of his adventure; partly to avoid the reproaches of the countess, which he feared, and partly not to make his dear daughter feel badly before there was any need. For the sake of appearances he complained about the loss of his hawk, which he said had flown away.

Now the beautiful Adelheid was a spinner with whom none other could compare. She was also a skillful weaver, and at the time had just finished weaving a piece of linen as fine as silk, which she had laid out to bleach on a grassy spot not far from the castle. Six weeks and six days had passed, and the beautiful spinner had not the slightest idea of the fate in store for her. No, she had not even a suspicion, though her father—who had grown a little down in the mouth as

the date set by the eagle drew near—had given her various hints, once telling her of an alarming dream he had had, and again recalling the long-forgotten Wulfild to her memory. But Adelheid was in the best of spirits, and thought her father was full of fancies. On the morning of the fateful seventh day she ran gaily down to the grassy plot and spread out her linen, so that it might be moistened by the morning dew. Then, when she had attended to her bleaching and was looking about, she saw a splendid procession of knights and squires riding along the highway. Since she had not yet dressed for the day, she hid behind a wild rose-bush which was in full bloom, and stared out at the splendid cavalcade. But when it reached the rose-bush the handsomest among the knights, a slender young fellow whose helmet was open, rode up to it and said gently: "I see you and seek you, dearest love! Ah, do not hide from me, but let me lift you up behind me on my horse, my lovely bride!"

Adelheid did not know just how or what she felt when she heard this speech. The charming knight pleased her very much, but the idea of marrying him was so unexpected, that she sank down on the ground and swooned away, and when she awoke she found herself in his arms, and he was riding off toward the forest.

In the meantime her mother had prepared breakfast, and when Adelheid did not appear, she sent out her



youngest daughter to see what had become of her. Out she went and did not return. The mother grew worried and thought she had better see what had happened to her daughters. So she went out and did not return. The count had noticed all this and his heart beat loudly in his breast. He stole out to the grassy plot and there his wife and daughter were still calling Adelheid with frightened voices. Then the count began to shout her name as well, though he knew that all his shouting was in vain. As he went along he passed the rose-bush, saw something shining in the grass and, lo and behold, there lay two large eggs of gold, each weighing at least a hundred pounds! Now he could no longer hold back the story of his adventure, and told his wife and daughter what had happened. "Disgusting peddler of souls!" cried his wife. "Murderous father! So you offer up your own flesh and blood to a monster for the sake of gold!"

The count, who as a rule was not much of a talker, did his best to explain that he had only done what he did because he was in danger of losing his life. But the broken-hearted mother did not cease reproaching him. So he did the best thing he could have done to end the discussion: he stopped talking, allowed the lady to say what she would, and in the meantime removed the golden eggs to a place of safety, rolling them back to the castle in front of him. Then, for the sake of appearances, he had the family go into mourning

for three days, and after that thought of nothing but resuming his former mode of life.

In a short time the castle was once more the abode of joy, the happy hunting grounds of every greedy noble and commoner in search of a meal. Balls, tourneys and splendid banquets were the order of the day. The lovely Bertha, the count's last remaining daughter, shone in the eyes of the stately knights at her father's court as the silver moon delights the sensitive wanderer in the midsummer night. She distributed the prizes at all the knightly games, and every evening danced the opening dance with the gentleman who had won the prize that day. The count's hospitality and his daughter's beauty drew the noblest knights to the castle from far, far away. Many tried to win the heart of the wealthy heiress, but it was hard for her to choose among so many suitors, since one seemed to outdo the other in nobility and riches. In fact, the lovely Bertha was so long making up her mind about whom to choose, that the golden eggs, which the count had not put off shelling, were soon no larger than hazelnuts. Again the count's finances fell into their former disorder, the tourneys were dropped, knights and squires disappeared, the castle once more began to look like an hermitage, and the count's family returned to its simple diet of boiled potatoes. Again the count strolled moodily through the fields and wished some new ad-

venture would take place; but none did, for he was afraid of venturing into the enchanted forest.

One day, however, he followed a flock of partridges so far that he came quite close to the horrible forest, and though he did not venture in, he walked along the edge a ways until he came to a great fish-pond which he had never noticed before, and saw a countless number of trout swimming in its clear, silvery waters. This discovery filled him with joy. There was nothing about the appearance of the pond to arouse suspicion; so he hurried home, made himself a net, and the following morning, bright and early, he was standing on the edge of the pond to cast it in. By good fortune he found a little skiff with a single oar among the reeds. He jumped into it, rowed about the pond, cast in his net, and after having caught more trout than he could carry in a single cast, started to row merrily back to shore again. About a stone's throw from the bank, however, his boat suddenly stopped moving. The count thought it had run aground, and tried with all his might and main to get it to move again. But all his efforts were useless. Soon the water began to shrink away from him on every side, and the boat seemed to be hanging on a cliff high, high above the surface of the pond. The inexperienced fisherman felt ill at ease because, although the boat seemed nailed to the spot, the shore appeared to fade away into the distance,



the pond broadened out into a great sea, the water which had left him high and dry returned in swollen billows which roared and foamed, and all at once he realized that a monster fish was carrying his boat and himself on its back. Then he resigned himself to his fate, anxiously waiting to see what would happen. Suddenly the fish dived and the boat floated once more; but a minute later the sea-monster was peering out of the water, and from its black throat, as though from a subterranean cellar, came the following words: "Daring fisherman, what have you done! You are murdering my subjects and must pay! Your life is forfeit for your crime!"

By this time the count was so used to these adventures that he knew quite well what was expected of him. He recovered from his first shock as soon as he noticed that the fish was willing to talk things over, and said boldly: "Sir Behemoth, do not violate the laws of hospitality! Let me take a dish of fish from your pond. If you were to call on me my kitchen and cellar would be at your service." "We are not such good friends as all that," answered the finny monster. "According to the law of might, the stronger devours the weaker. You have stolen my subjects to devour them, and so I shall devour you!" With this the savage fish opened its jaws still more widely, as though it meant to swallow man and boat.

"Ah, spare my life!" cried the count. "You can see





“He realized that a monster fish was  
carrying his boat and himself on its back”

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that I will make a very slim breakfast for a stomach like yours." The fish seemed to reflect. "Very well," it then said, "I know that you have a beautiful daughter. Promise that she shall be my bride, and take your life in return." When the count heard the fish talking this way, all his fears left him. "She shall be yours!" he cried. "You will make a fine son-in-law, one to whom no good father could deny his child. Yet, tell me, what is your custom as regards a dower for the bride's father?" The fish replied: "Gold and silver have I none, but a great treasure of pearls lies at the bottom of this pond. You may have all you want." "Well," said the count, "three bushels of large pearls are not too much for a lovely bride." "They are yours," spoke the fish, "and the bride is mine. I shall fetch her home in seven months' time." With that he waved his huge tail merrily and at once drove the boat ashore.

The count brought home his trout, had them fried and ate them with great enjoyment, together with his wife and lovely Bertha. Poor Bertha did not know that the meal was to cost her dear. Six months passed, and when the silver moon began to fill out and grow rounder for the seventh time, the count began to think of what was going to happen. In order not to witness it, he decided to make a little trip into the country, and this he did. It was in the noonhour, hot and oppressive, that a stately band of horsemen galloped up to the castle. The countess, startled by the arrival of so many

unknown visitors, did not know whether to let the drawbridge fall. But when a knight well-known to her called out she did so. This knight had often attended the tourneys given at the castle in the count's days of wealth and splendor, and lovely Bertha had often bestowed prizes on him, and danced with him. When the count's circumstances had changed, he had disappeared with the other knights. The poor countess was ashamed to think that she had nothing in the way of food or drink to offer the noble knight and his following. But he said in the kindest manner that all he wanted was a drink of fresh water from the cool rocky spring in the castle. And in fact he had never taken wine in the old days and was known as the "Water Knight" for that very reason. Her mother told lovely Bertha to run to the spring and fill a pitcher, and when she had done so she brought the knight his drink in a crystal goblet. He took it from her charming hand, put his lips to the spot where her own lovely red lips had rested, and drank to her health. The countess, meanwhile, felt very uncomfortable. There was not a thing she could offer her guest to eat. At last she remembered that a juicy melon had just ripened in the castle garden. At once she went out, picked the melon, laid it on an earthen dish with a border of grape-leaves and fragrant flowers, and brought it in to offer her guest.

But when she stepped out of the garden, the court-

yard of the castle was bare and empty; and there were neither horses nor servingmen to be seen, and in the room there was neither knight nor squire. She called her daughter Bertha, and looked for her all over the house, but could not find her. In the entrance room, however, stood three clean linen sacks, which she had not noticed in her first alarm. She laid her hand on one, and it felt as though it were filled with peas; but her grief did not allow her to examine it more closely. Instead she gave herself up to her sorrow, and cried without stopping until evening, when the count returned and found her grieving bitterly. She did not conceal what had happened to him, though she would have preferred to have done so; for she was afraid he would reproach her for having allowed a stranger knight to enter the castle, and carry off her lovely daughter. But the count comforted her in the kindest way, merely inquired after the sacks of peas, which she had mentioned, and then went out to examine them, opening one in her presence. Imagine the surprise of the sorrowing countess when great pearls, as large as the largest garden peas, rolled out of the sack, pearls perfectly rounded, and of the purest pink and white lustre. Well she realized that the knight who had carried off her daughter had paid for each of her tears with a pearl, and she formed a good opinion of his wealth and standing. She also consoled herself with the thought that her son-in-law was no monster but a



handsome knight, and the count was careful to say nothing to the contrary.

Now the parents had lost all three of their lovely daughters; but instead they had gained a tremendous treasure. Soon the count turned a portion of the pearls into money. From morning till evening the castle was crowded with merchants and Jews, who came to chaffer for the costly pearls. The count took his towns and villages out of pawn, handed over the hunting castle to a vassal, and returning to his former residence, once more surrounded himself with a court. But now he no longer lived like a wastrel, but as a careful husbandman; for he had no more daughters to sell. The noble pair lived in the greatest comfort; yet the countess could not resign herself to the loss of her daughters. She wore mourning day in and day out, and was never merry. For a long time she hoped to see her Bertha with the rich knight of the pearls, and whenever a stranger came to her court she suspected it might be he. At last the count no longer could bear to see her deceiving herself with false hopes, and told her that her third son-in-law was a sea monster. "Alas," sighed the countess, "did heaven send me children merely to have them become the prey of horrible monsters? What does every earthly joy, what do all the riches in the world mean to an unhappy mother?" "Dear wife," replied the count, "calm yourself. Things are as they are and cannot well be changed." But these

words did not comfort the countess and she continued to mourn as before.

## II

### *Reinald the Wonder Child*

Yet what neither her husband's words, nor the songs and string music with which her maidens tried to cheer her could do for the poor countess, heaven was able to accomplish. One day she made a pilgrimage to a grotto in which a pious hermit lived, not far from her palace, provided with a beautiful rosary of milk-white pearls as a gift for the holy man, and so fruitful of result were his prayers that in the course of time heaven sent her a little son to make up for the loss of her daughters.

The happy event was celebrated with splendid festivities by the overjoyed parents, and his father at once named him Reinald the Wonder Child. The boy was handsome as handsome could be, and as he was carefully trained in every knightly art, he grew up to be his father's joy and his mother's consolation. Yet, though he was the apple of her eye, she never quite forgot her three daughters who had disappeared. Often, when she clasped Reinald in her arms, a tear would fall on his cheeks and when he grew older he would ask: "Why do you cry, mother?"

But the countess did not reveal the cause of her sor-

row to him. No one—save the count and herself—knew whither the three young countesses had disappeared. Some declared they had been carried off by wandering knights—something which often happened in those days. Others said they were living hidden away in a nunnery. Still others claimed to have seen them in the following of the Queen of Burgundy or the Countess of Flanders. At last, however, Reinald managed to coax the secret from his mother. She told him the adventures of his three sisters in every detail, and he remembered every word of the strange stories she told. And now his one and only wish was to gird on his sword, and mount his horse, to go seek adventures and hunt up his sisters in the magic forest, and deliver them from their enchantment.

As soon as he had been dubbed a knight, he begged his father to let him ride to the king's host in Flanders, and take part in a campaign. The count was pleased with his son's knightly courage, so he gave him horses and weapons, squires and horseboys, and sent him off with his blessing, though his worried mother was loath to see him go.

No sooner had the young knight turned his back on his native town, than he left the king's highway and trotted away to his father's hunting castle, where he was taken in and entertained by the vassal who lived there. Early the following morning, while everyone in the



castle was still fast asleep, Reinald saddled his horse, left his attendants behind, and full of youthful daring and courage, galloped off to the enchanted forest. The further he rode into it the thicker grew the trees, while the steep cliffs echoed and reechoed to the hoof-beats of his horse. Round about was nothing but a lonely wilderness, and the thickly growing trees seemed trying to prevent him from going on. So the young knight dismounted, left his horse to graze, and cut a way with his sword through the brush, climbing steep crags, and sliding down into deep gorges. With much labor he at last reached a winding valley, through which ran a clear brook. He followed its curves until in the distance a rocky grotto disclosed its subterranean mouth to his eyes, together with something that looked like a human figure. The daring youth now hastened his steps, and taking a path between the trees, peeped through the high oaks. There, directly opposite, in front of the grotto, a young woman was sitting in the grass, with one handsome boy in her lap while another child played in the grass. Reinald at once knew from his mother's story that she must be his sister Wulfild, and hastily ran from his hiding-place to reveal himself to her. As soon as she saw him, however, she dropped the boy she was holding in the grass, hurried to meet him, and said in a sorrowful voice: "O youth, what unlucky star has led you into this forest? It is the

dwelling-place of a savage bear, who devours every human being who comes to his abode. Flee and save your life!"

Reinald bowed courteously to the lovely lady and answered: "Have no fear, noble lady! I know this forest and your adventures, and have come to break the magic spell which holds you captive here."

"Foolish youth!" she cried. "Who are you, who dare speak of breaking this powerful spell, and how are you going to do so?"

"With this right arm and this good sword. I am Reinald, called the Wonder Child, the son of the count from whom three lovely daughters were robbed by this enchanted forest. Are you not Wulfild, my oldest sister?"

When she heard this speech the lady was horrified, and looked at the youth with silent amazement. He made the most of his chance, and proved his claims by telling her so much family news that she could no longer doubt he was her brother. So she embraced him tenderly, though her knees shook as she did so, owing to the danger which threatened him.

Then she led her guest into the grotto in order to find a corner in which she could hide him. It was a broad, gloomy vault, and in one corner lay a heap of moss, on which the bear slept; while on the opposite side stood a splendid bed, hung with red damask and golden tassels, for the lady. Reinald had to promise

to slip hurriedly under the bed and await what fate was in store for him. He was not to utter a sound or make the least bit of noise, and his anxious sister begged him, above all, not to cough or sneeze. No sooner had the young dare-devil crept into his place of refuge, than the savage bear came grumbling into the grotto, sniffing about everywhere with his great, black snout, covered with blood. For he had discovered the knight's noble, cream-colored horse in the wood, and torn it to pieces. Wulfild sat on her stately bed as though on a hot stove, and her heart was filled with fear, for she saw that the bear was in a true bearish humor, because he suspected a stranger was concealed in the cave.

In vain Wulfild petted him and scratched his ears, the moody beast paid no attention to her. "I smell human flesh," he grumbled. "My dear Bear," replied the lady, "what an idea! How could a human being stray into this lonely wilderness?" But the bear obstinately repeated, "I smell human flesh!" and kept sniffing about Wulfild's bed. Reinald felt anything but comfortable, and in spite of his courage his brow was bedewed with a cold perspiration. Yet the extremity of his danger restored the lady's courage and confidence: "Friend Bear," she said, "kindly stop this nonsense! Keep to your own side of the grotto or I shall grow angry!"

The bear pretended to pay no attention to this threat,



but at the same time he was a little afraid of Wulfild and, when he finally started to thrust his shaggy head under the bed, she gave him such a hearty kick in his side that he crept off quite humbly to his heap of moss, licking his paws, and soon fell asleep and began to snore like the bear he was. Wulfild now refreshed her brother with a glass of raspberry vinegar and some biscuits, and told him not to lose heart, since the greatest danger was over. Then Reinald, much wearied by his adventure, fell into a deep slumber and soon was snoring as loudly as the bear himself.

When he awoke he could not believe his eyes. He was in a magnificent chamber hung with silken tapestries, and the morning sun was shining brightly into the room through the curtains. Beside his bed, his clothes and armor had been carefully laid out on silken stools, and on one of them stood a small silver bell to summon the attendants. Reinald had no idea how he had been transported from the horrible grotto to this magnificent palace, and doubted whether he was dreaming now, or whether he had dreamed his whole adventure in the forest. In order to settle the question he rang the bell. At once a handsomely dressed chamberlain entered, asked after his commands, and said that his sister Wulfild and her husband Albert, called the Bear, were awaiting him with the greatest impatience. Although the word "Bear" made Reinald shudder, he dressed rapidly, stepped out into the ante-

room, which was filled with pages, runners and haideucks, and with this suite following him, passed through a number of splendid apartments and into a great audience chamber. There his sister received him with all the grace and dignity of a queen; while beside her stood two charming children, a little prince of seven and a cunning little girl, who was still in leading-strings. A moment later Albert, called the Bear, entered; but there was absolutely nothing bearish about him, and he appeared to be the most amiable prince one could imagine. Wulfild introduced her brother, and Albert embraced his brother-in-law with the warmest friendship and brotherly love.

The unfortunate prince and his entire court had been enchanted by an evil magician for days. That is to say, it was granted him, every seven days, to be rid of his enchantment from sunrise to sunrise. But as soon as the little silver stars paled in the heavens, the evil spell once more fell upon him with the morning dew. Then the castle turned into a steep, inaccessible cliff; the charming park surrounding it into a desert waste; the spraying fountains and cascades into dreary swamps; the lord of the castle himself became a shaggy bear, and his squires and knights changed into martens, while his court ladies and their maids flew about as owls and bats, which cheeped and lamented day and night. It was on one of the unenchanted days that Albert had led home his bride. Lovely Wulfild, who first wept

six days in the belief that she had been carried off by a shaggy bear, was happy when, on the seventh, she found that her husband was a handsome young knight, who led her into a splendid palace where all sorts of bridal festivities awaited her. She was received by pretty maidens in myrtle-wreaths, who sang and played string music in her honor, took off her simple country clothes, and adorned her with royal robes. And though Wulfild was not vain, she could not help but feel pleased with her appearance as reflected by the crystal mirrors which hung on every wall of her room. A great banquet followed the marriage ceremony, and the day ended with a splendid costume ball. When she entered her bridal chamber, where little Cupids with golden wings looked down from the blue skies of the ceiling, she had forgotten all about the dreadful six days of beardom which had gone before.

When she awoke the following morning, however, and raised the silken curtain of her bed, she was shocked to find that she was in a kind of gloomy cellar vault, in a far corner of which she recognized the horrible figure of the bear, who was looking at her in a gloomy and dejected manner.

She sank back on her pillows, and after a time broke out into loud lamentations, which were answered by the croaking voices of a hundred owls outside the cave. The sensitive bear could not bear to witness this sad scene. He felt he must get out under heaven's blue



sky to pant forth his grief and rage at his hard fate. Heavily he rose from his bed of moss, trotted grumbling into the forest, and did not return until the seventh day, a short time before regaining his human shape. The six sorrowful days in the meantime had seemed six unhappy years to the lady. In the excitement of the wedding, everyone had forgotten to provide the bride with a supply of food (for the magician's spell had no power over lifeless things which Wulfild herself touched), so the unfortunate girl had gone without eating for two days. At last she grew so hungry that she slipped out of the cave, drank a little water from the brook flowing past it in the hollow of her hand, picked some berries which grew on the bushes and even, in her wild confusion, swallowed a handful of acorns, bringing back an apronful of them to the cave, though she hardly knew that she did so, for she felt quite willing to die.

With this thought uppermost in her mind she fell asleep on the evening of the seventh day and awoke in the handsome room to which she had retired on her wedding night. Soon her husband entered, and after begging her forgiveness with tears in his eyes, explained the nature of the magic spell, and the fact that he was released from it only every seventh day. Wulfild was touched by her husband's kindness and consideration. She decided to resign herself to her fate, and make her Albert the happiest human bear under the sun. In

order not to starve again on her return to the grotto, when at the palace table she always laid aside a plentiful supply of cakes, confections, sweet oranges and other fine fruit in a couple of wide pockets she had made in her dress. And she also carefully put aside some of the pleasant beverages which were served; so that after her first unhappy experience she always had plenty to eat and drink in the cave. Nature is kind to those who suffer from evil enchantments and so, although Wulfild had already lived twenty-one years in the magic forest, nature only charged her with three and she was as young and beautiful as ever. And the same applied to the enchanted husband and his court.

All this the noble pair confided to Reinald while they took a little walk through the park, sitting under a bower formed of wild jasmine and rambler roses. The happy day passed quickly amid all sorts of distractions. Dinner was served and then there were games, and some of the courtiers strolled together with the ladies in the park, with merry jests and lute-music, until the trumpets called them to supper, which was eaten in a long gallery whose walls were covered with mirrors, by the light of thousands of waxen tapers. All ate, drank and were merry until the hour of midnight. Wulfild, as usual, filled her large pockets with food, and advised Reinald to do the same.

When the table had been cleared, Albert seemed to

grow restless and whispered something in his wife's ear. She at once took her brother to one side and sadly said: "Dear brother, it is time for us to part. The hour of transformation is drawing near, when all the joys of this palace will disappear. Albert is worried about you. He fears for your life, for he would not be able to resist his animal instinct, were he to meet you in the woods, and he would at once tear you to pieces. So leave the enchanted forest and never come back again!"

"No, no," cried Reinald. "Let fate have her way with me, but do not ask me to part from you, my dear ones! I came here to seek you, sister mine, and now that I have found you I shall not leave the enchanted forest without you. Tell me how I can free you from this powerful enchantment?" "Alas," said his sister, "that is something no human being can do!"

Here Albert interrupted their talk, and when he had joined them and had heard the brave young knight's resolve, he begged him so urgently not to carry it out that Reinald finally yielded to his brother-in-law's prayers and his sister's tears, and agreed to say farewell to them.

Albert parted from the brave youth with a brotherly hug, and then, after his sister had clasped him around the neck and he was about to go, took a portfolio from his pocket and from it drew three bear's hairs, wrapped them in a piece of paper, and jokingly handed them to



the knight as a remembrance of his adventure in the enchanted forest. "At the same time," he added seriously, "should you ever need help in time of need, rub the three hairs between your hands and see what happens."

A splendid carriage to which were harnessed six horses stood waiting in the courtyard of the castle, surrounded by many horsemen and servants. "Farewell, my brother!" cried Albert, called the Bear, as he stood at the carriage step. "Farewell, my brother!" answered Reinald the Wonder Child, and with that the carriage thundered across the drawbridge, and was off and away. The golden stars were still gleaming brightly in the dark skies of night, as the carriage and its escort rolled over stick and stone, up-hill and down-dale, across meadow and field at full gallop, without a moment's pause. After an hour had passed the sky began to turn grey, and suddenly all the torches the horsemen carried went out, Reinald dropped to the ground with a thud, without any idea of what had happened, and the carriage, together with horses and horsemen, vanished. In the grey light of dawn, however, he noticed six black ants drawing a nut-shell galloping away between his feet. Then the bold young knight had an idea of what had occurred. Taking care not to step on an ant by mistake, he quietly waited until the sun rose and then, as he was still within the boundaries of the enchanted forest, decided to hunt up his two

younger sisters and even if he did not free them from their enchantment, at least pay them a visit.

For three days he wandered about the forest without meeting with any adventure. And he had just swallowed the last piece of white bread he had brought with him from the table of his brother-in-law Albert, called the Bear, when he heard a great rustling high above his head in the air, as though a ship were cleaving the waves in full sail. Looking up he saw a tremendous eagle, who had just dropped into a nest which he had in a tall tree. Reinald was delighted with this discovery, and hid himself in the brush to wait for the eagle to leave the nest again. When seven hours had passed the eagle rose into the air once more, and the youth immediately stepped into the clearing and cried in a loud voice: "Adelheid, dear sister, if you are dwelling in this high oak, answer me, for I am your brother Reinald, known as the Wonder Child! I am looking for you, and wish to deliver you from the magic spell which binds you!"

As soon as he had stopped speaking, a gentle, girlish voice answered from above, as though from the clouds: "If you are Reinald, the Wonder Child, your sister Adelheid welcomes you! Do not delay climbing up and embracing her, for she is sad at heart."

Charmed with this speech, the knight boldly made an attempt to climb the high oak, but in vain. He ran around the stem three times, but it was too thick

for him to get his arms about it, and the nearest limbs were too high above the ground for him to reach. While he was thinking of some way of climbing the tree, a silken ladder dropped down to him, by whose aid he soon reached the top of the tree and the eagle's nest, built as solidly as a platform in a linden-crown. There he found his sister sitting under a canopy protected from the weather on the outside by wax taffeta, and lined on the inside with rose-colored satin, holding a charming babe in her lap. Brother and sister greeted each other tenderly, and Adelheid seemed well informed about all that had taken place at home, and knew that Reinald was her brother. Her husband, Edgar, called the Eagle, was enchanted by weeks. That is, he was freed from his enchantment every seventh week. In the meantime, to please her, her husband had often flown to her father's court and thus brought back news from time to time. Adelheid invited her brother to spend their next transformation-time with them, and though it was six weeks off, Reinald was more than willing to do so. She hid him in a hollow tree, and day by day supplied him from the provisions she kept under her sofa, where she stored away food enough for the six weeks intervening. She took leave of her brother with some good advice: "As you love your life, do not let Edgar's eagle eyes spy you! If he sees you in the brush, that will be the end of you. He will pick out your eyes, and devour you



as he devoured three or four squires, whom he found wandering about the forest yesterday!"

Reinald shuddered to think of the fate of his squires, promised to be careful, and patiently waited in his hollow tree for six tiresome weeks; though he had the pleasure of visiting with his sister when the eagle left the nest. Yet in the end his patience was rewarded by the seven happy days he passed.

The reception his Eagle brother-in-law gave him was no less hearty than that he had received from his brother-in-law the Bear. Edgar's palace and court was as splendid as Albert's, every day was a day of feasts and festivities, and the time of the fateful change drew near only too rapidly. On the evening of the seventh day, Edgar dismissed his guest with a tender embrace, yet warned him against remaining in his part of the forest. "Must I part from you forever, you dear ones?" said Reinald sorrowfully. "Is it impossible to break the magic spell which holds you captive here? Had I a hundred lives to lose, I would dare them all to release you!"

Edgar shook his hand heartily: "Thank you, noble young man," he cried, "for your love and friendship, but give up all thought of such a venture. It is possible to break the magic spell which holds us, but should you dare the attempt? If you undertake it and fail, you will lose your life, and you shall not make such a sacrifice for my sake!"

This speech only made Reinald the more eager to dare the adventure. His eyes sparkled with longing, and his cheeks glowed hopefully at the prospect of freeing them. He insisted that his brother-in-law Edgar tell him how he could break the enchantment of the magic forest. But the latter would not disclose the secret to him, for fear the daring youth might lose his life.

“All that I can say, dear companion,” he concluded, “is that you yourself must find the key to our enchantment if you are to succeed in delivering us.”

With that he drew out his portfolio and took from it three eagle feathers, which he handed to the knight as a remembrance of his visit. Then they parted the best of friends. Edgar’s marshal of the court and his courtiers accompanied the esteemed visitor along a long alley, planted with towering weeping willows and cypresses, to the end of Edgar’s estates, locked the iron-barred gates, and then hurried back, for the time of transformation was near.

Reinald sat down beneath a linden-tree to watch the change take place. The full moon was shining bright and clear, and he could see Edgar’s castle high above the crests of the tallest trees. But the dawn buried it in a thick mist, and when it had disappeared in the rays of the rising sun, castle, park and iron-bound gate had vanished, and he found himself in a dreary waste,

on a rocky cliff beside a deep abyss. The young adventurer looked high and low for some path which would lead him into the valley. Far, far away in the distance he saw a lake whose surface reflected the sun-rays in silver light. With the greatest difficulty he pushed on all day long through the thick forest, his whole heart set on reaching the lake, where he suspected he might find his sister Bertha. Yet the deeper he penetrated into the tangled wild-wood the harder he found it to go on, and finally he lost sight of the lake together with all hope of finding it. Yet toward sunset he once more saw the silver water gleaming through the trees as the forest grew more open, and at last reached the shore just as night was beginning to fall. Worn and weary, he lay down under a tree, and did not wake until the sun was high in the skies. Strengthened and refreshed by his slumbers, he then quickly leaped up and strode up and down the shore of the lake, trying to think of some way of reaching his sister under the water.

In vain he called out: "Bertha, dear sister, if you are living in this lake then answer me! I am Reinald, your brother, known as the Wonder Child, and have come to release you from your enchantment, and lead you out of your wet and watery prison!" His only answer was a thousandfold echo in the forest.

"Ye dear fishes," he went on, as whole schools of



red-speckled trout swam to the shore and seemed to be staring at him, "tell your mistress that her brother is waiting here on the shore to meet her!"

He broke up all the bread crusts he still had in his pockets and threw them into the lake, hoping to bribe the fishes to carry his message to his sister. But the trout greedily snapped up the crumbs without paying any further attention to him. Then Reinald saw that his speech to the fish had been wasted, so he tried to gain his ends by other means. As a well-trained knight he had practiced every manly art, and could swim like a musk-rat. So he took off his armor, kept only his bare sword among all his weapons and—since the little boat his father once had found was nowhere in sight—leaped boldly into the water clad only in his scarlet tunic, to look for his brother-in-law Behemoth. "He will not swallow me out of hand," thought Reinald to himself, "and no doubt will let me talk sense to him, as he did my father." So he splashed about in the water in order to attract the attention of the sea monster, and floated out into the middle of the lake on the blue waves.

While his strength allowed, he followed his watery path without meeting any adventure; but when he began to tire he glanced back at the shore and saw, not far away, a thin mist which seemed to come from a column of ice rising above the water. Swimming with all his might in order to look at it close by, he found

a short column of mountain crystal, seemingly hollow, rising above the surface of the lake. Out of this column a most appetizing odor rose in little clouds of steam, which the breezes playfully spread about the lake. The daring swimmer thought that this was probably the chimney of his sister's subterranean dwelling, and was brave enough to slip into it. Nor had his guess been wrong. The chimney-flue led straight down to the fire-place in the bedroom of the lovely Bertha, who, dressed in a flowered wrapper, was that very moment preparing her morning chocolate over a little fire of red sandal-wood. When the lady heard the noise in the chimney, and suddenly saw two human feet jerking about in the flue, she was so startled by the unexpected visit that she overturned the pot of chocolate in her fright, and fell back fainting in her arm-chair.

Reinald shook her until she regained her senses and, as soon as she had recovered she said in a faint voice: "Unfortunate wretch, whoever you may be, how dare you enter this subterranean dwelling? Do you not know that your boldness will result in your death?" "Have no fear, my dear," said the brave knight, "I am Reinald, the Wonder Child, your brother, and I have dared death and danger to visit my beloved sisters and try to break the magic spell which holds them captive." Then Bertha tenderly embraced her brother, though her slender body trembled with fear.

Ufo the Dolphin had, from time to time, visited her father's court in the strictest incognito—or, in other words, disguised so that none knew who he was—and he had recently discovered that Reinald had set forth to find his sisters. He had often regretted the youth's daring venture.

“If his brother-in-law the Bear does not devour him, or his brother-in-law the Eagle peck out his eyes, then I myself, his brother-in-law Dolphin, will not fail to swallow him, for I know I could not resist the animal instinct to let him slide down my throat if I met him. And if you, my darling, were to clasp him in your arms to protect him, I would shatter the crystal walls of your dwelling, and you would drown when the waters rushed in and filled it. He himself would disappear in my capacious stomach, for as you know, my pet, visitors are not received in our house during the time of transformation.”

Lovely Bertha hid none of these things from her brother, but he only answered: “Hide me where the sea monster cannot see me, as my other sisters did, so that I can stay with you until the month of disenchantment comes?”

“Alas,” said Bertha, “where could I hide you? Do you not see that this house is built of crystal, and that its walls are as transparent as the clear ice-sky which surrounds the entire world?” “There must be some corner in this house where I could be hidden from his



sight," answered Reinald, "or are you the only woman unable to hide something from her husband?"

Lovely Bertha had never had a reason to hide anything from her husband before, but after much thought she remembered the store-room where she kept her fire-wood, and decided that she might be able to hide her brother there. He made no objection, but arranged the wood in the transparent room as artfully as a beaver darkens the walls of his underground den, and hid himself in it. His sister then hurried away, put on her best dress, and went into the audience hall to await the visit of her husband, Ufo the Dolphin. Now, the only way Ufo the Dolphin could visit his charming wife during the time he was disguised as a sea-monster, was by swimming around the outside of the crystal house and looking in at her.

No sooner had the lovely Bertha entered the audience-room than the monster fish came swimming up. While he was still at a distance the waves began to roar, and the flood swirled and eddied in rings about the crystal palace. The sea monster stood outside before the room, breathed in streams of water and breathed them out again from his great maw, while he silently stared at his charming wife out of glaring, sea-green eyes. Yet, though Bertha tried to look as though nothing had happened, her heart trembled, she breathed quickly and nervously, and her cheeks and lips kept blushing and paling in turn. Though he was

only a fish, the Dolphin was not stupid. He felt that something was not in order, made some horrible grimaces, and shot off as swiftly as an arrow. Then he swam around the palace, darting hither and thither, and creating such an uproar with the waves that the walls of the crystal dwelling shook, and poor, frightened Bertha thought he would shatter them any minute!

Yet, though he examined everything thoroughly, the Dolphin could discover nothing which justified his suspicions. Gradually he grew quieter, and fortunately he had so stirred the water that Bertha's state of terror escaped his notice. He swam away and the lady slowly recovered from her fright. Reinald remained quietly in the wood-pile until the time of disenchantment arrived. Yet brother-in-law Dolphin still had a vague suspicion, for he never forgot to swim around the house three times a day, and look at every corner of the crystal palace. But he did not act as ferociously as he had the first time, and at last the hour of disenchantment freed the patient prisoner from his lonely wood-pile.

One day when he awoke, he found himself in a royal palace on a little island. Buildings, pleasure-gardens, market-places, all seemed to be swimming on the surface of the water, hundreds of gondolas were shooting about the canals, and the open squares were filled with a gay and merry throng. In short, the palace of his brother-in-law Dolphin was a little Venice. The

young knight was received with the same hearty friendliness he had met with at the courts of his other brothers-in-law. Ufo the Dolphin was enchanted for months, and the seventh month was always the month when he was freed from the enchantment for the time being. Since Reinald spent more time with him he became better acquainted with his brother-in-law Ufo, and more intimate with him than with the others. For a long time Reinald had been tormented with curiosity to find out how fate had come to curse the three princes with so unnatural a state of enchantment. He often questioned his sister Bertha, but she could give him no information, and Ufo preserved a mysterious silence concerning the riddle. So Reinald's curiosity was not gratified. Meanwhile, the days of happiness hurried by on the wings of the wind, and the moon lost her silver horns and grew fuller every day.

One evening, when they had taken a walk together, Ufo informed his brother-in-law Reinald that they would have to part in a few hours; and advised him to return to his parents, who were much worried about him. His mother especially, so he said, could not be comforted since she had found out that he had gone hunting adventures in the enchanted forest instead of riding to Flanders. Reinald asked whether there were any adventures still to be dared in the magic forest, and Ufo said there was one more, of which he had already been told: that of obtaining the key to the en-



chantments, and destroying the powerful talisman which bound his brothers-in-law. So long as the talisman kept its power, there was no hope of release for the three princes.

"However," Ufo added in his kindly way, "take my advice, young man, and thank the translunar spirits and the protection of your sisters that you have not become a victim of your venture to ride through the magic forest. Be content with the fame you already have earned, return home and tell your parents all that has happened, and bring back your dear mother from the brink of the grave to which grief and sorrow on your account have brought her!"

Reinald promised to do as Ufo wished—with the exception of one or two things. For it is well known that sons, when they have grown to be big, boisterous fellows, and can ride about on wild horses, do not always pay heed to a mother's tears. Ufo soon saw what the youth had in mind, so he drew forth his portfolio and took from it three fish-scales, which he gave to Reinald, saying: "If some day you want help in time of need, rub these between your hands till they are warm, and see what happens."

Reinald then entered a beautiful gilded gondola and was rowed ashore by two gondoliers. No sooner had he reached the shore than gondola, castle, gardens and market-places all vanished, and nothing was left of all the splendor but a fish-pond, round which grew rushes

which bowed and rustled in the morning breeze. The knight found himself on the very spot where he had daringly leaped into the water three months before. His shield and armor lay where he had left them and his lance where he had thrust it into the ground. But he promised himself that he would never rest until he held the key to the enchantments in his hand.

### III

#### *The Key to the Enchantments*

“Who will tell me the way and who will set my feet in the path which will lead me to the most wonderful adventure of all the adventures of this endless forest? O ye translunar powers, look kindly down on me, and if any human being can break the magic spell, let me be that happy mortal!”

Thus Reinald spoke in his heart and soul, and then at once pushed on into the pathless forest. For seven long days he wandered through the endless wilderness without fear or trembling, and for seven nights he slept under the open sky, till his weapons grew rusty with the dews of night. On the eighth day he climbed a rocky peak from which he could look down into tremendous depths. On one side opened a green valley surrounded by high walls of rocky granite, on which grew pines and cypresses. In the distance he saw what

looked to him like some kind of monument. Two gigantic marble columns with capitals and pedestals of brass supported a Doric crosspiece, which rested against the rocky wall, and over-shadowed a steel portal provided with strong bolts and bars. Not far from this portal a great black bull was grazing as though guarding the entrance.

This sight made Reinald sure he had found the adventure of which his brother-in-law Ufo had spoken, and he at once made up his mind to dare it. He slipped down from the rocky peak to the valley below, and came within bow-shot of the bull before the latter discovered him. As soon as it saw him, the savage beast leaped up, ran furiously to and fro as though preparing for battle, lowered its head and snorted till clouds of dust arose, stamped the ground with its hoofs till the earth trembled, and rammed its horns against the rocks till the latter broke into pieces.

Reinald stood on the defensive, and when the bull charged he skillfully avoided its dangerous horns and gave the monster's neck such a powerful blow with his sword that he thought he must have cut off its head. But alas, the bull's neck was proof against steel and iron! The sword broke into pieces, and only the hilt remained in the knight's hand. All he had left with which to defend himself was his oakwood lance with its double-edged point of steel. When the bull charged a second time, the lance broke like straw.



Then the black bull raised the helpless youth on its horns and flung him high into the air like a feather ball, watching for him to fall, in order to catch him or trample him beneath its hoofs. Fortunately, as he was falling, Reinald happened to drop into the spreading branches of a wild pear tree which caught him in a kindly embrace. Though every rib in his body seemed to crack, he had enough presence of mind left to cling to the tree, while the furious bull ran so violently against it with its brazen forehead that it came up by the roots and was about to fall.

As the murderous beast turned back for another charge, Reinald happened to think of the gifts his brothers-in-law had given him. Chance put the paper with the three bear's hairs into his hand first. He rubbed them as hard as he could, and that very moment a savage bear appeared, who at once began to fight furiously with the bull. Soon the bear gained the upper hand, it struck down the bull and tore it to pieces. But as it did so, a timid duck shot up out of the bull's body and flew off with a loud cry. Reinald suspected that the bird was mocking the bear's victory over the bull, and that if it escaped its value would be lost. So he quickly seized the three eagle feathers and rubbed them between his hands. At once an enormous eagle appeared in the air, at whose sight the timid duck tried to hide in the bushes. But while the eagle floated high above it in the air, the knight at

once drove the duck from its hiding-place and pursued it to a clearing in the forest where the trees grew far apart and it could not hide. There the duck took to the air, and flew off in the direction of the fish-pond. At once the eagle shot down from the skies and seized and killed the duck. But while the eagle was doing this a golden egg fell from it into the water. Reinald, who had been watching carefully, knew that he had to deal with a new deceit. He at once rubbed his fish-scales between his hands and lo and behold, a dolphin raised its head from the water, caught the golden egg in its mouth, and spewed it out on the shore. Then the knight was glad at heart. He broke open the golden egg with a stone, and out fell a little key, which he at once knew must be the key to the enchantments.

Quickly he hastened back to the steel door in the rock. The little key seemed to be far too small for the monstrous lock; yet he thought he would try it, and no sooner had he touched it than the lock sprang open of its own accord, the bolts and bars drew back of themselves, and the steel portal opened wide before him. With a glad heart he descended into a gloomy grotto, in which seven doors led to seven subterranean chambers, each one of them magnificently decorated and lit with the finest wax tapers. Reinald passed through one after the other, and in the very last found an alcove in which a beautiful young girl lay in a magic slumber on a sofa.

He fell in love with the sleeping beauty at first sight, and when he had recovered from his surprise, looked about the room, and opposite the lovely sleeper, discovered an alabaster tablet on which all sorts of curious characters were engraved. He at once suspected that this was the magic talisman whose power was responsible for all the enchantments of the forest. Filled with honest indignation, he clenched his fist in the iron gauntlet he wore, and struck it with all his might. At once the beautiful maiden awoke from her sleep, looked timidly at the talisman, and then sank back into slumber. Again Reinald repeated his blow and the same thing happened.

Reinald now resolved to destroy the talisman; but since he had neither sword nor lance, nothing but his two strong arms, he seized the alabaster tablet and dashed it down from its high marble pedestal on the marble floor, where it broke into bits. The young lady again awoke from her deathlike slumber, and this time saw the knight, who had respectfully dropped on one knee before her. Yet before she addressed him she hid her lovely face in her veil, and then said angrily: "Away with you, disgusting monster! Even in the disguise of a handsome youth you shall not deceive my eyes nor win my heart. You know how I feel with regard to you, so let me return to the deathlike sleep your magic spells have cast over me!"

Reinald saw that the lady had made a mistake, so



he did not take her angry speech to heart, but said: "Charming lady, do not be angry! I am no disgusting monster, who holds you captive here, but Count Reinald, known as the Wonder Child. See, the magic spell which held you enchanted has been destroyed!"

The maiden now peeped out at him from beneath her veil, and when she saw the alabaster tablet lying broken on the ground she was amazed at the young adventurer's daring deed, gave him a friendly glance, and saw that he was good to look upon. So she held out her hand, told him to rise and said: "If all be as you say, noble knight, then complete your work and lead me out of this horrible cave, so that I may once more see God's bright sunshine, if it be day outside, or His golden stars, if it be night!"

Reinald offered her his arm, to lead her through the seven magnificent rooms, but when he opened the door the darkness was so thick that one could feel it. All the candles had gone out and the crystal chandelier no longer poured down its soft, glimmering light from the high roof of the basalt vault. The noble pair had to feel their way in the dark for a long time before they managed to escape from the long corridors, and saw the light of day gleaming in the distant entrance to the rocky cavern. The maiden who had been freed from the magic spell breathed in the piney air of the forest and the fragrance of the flowers which covered the blooming meadows of the valley with delight. Then

she sat down in the grass with the handsome knight and each thought the other a most pleasant companion. But Reinald, for all he so greatly admired the lady, was very curious to know who she might be, so he politely begged her to tell him. At once the fair unknown opened her rosy lips and said:

“My name is Hildegarde and I am the daughter of Radbod, Prince of Pomerania. Zornebock, the Prince of the Sorbs, demanded my hand from my father in marriage. Yet, seeing that he was a horrible giant and an unbelieving pagan, and had the name of being an evil sorcerer and magician besides, he was refused under the pretext that I was too young. This made the pagan very angry. He met my father, slew him in battle and took possession of my lands. I had taken refuge with my aunt, the Countess of Vohburg, for my three brothers, all brave knights, were knight-errants at the time, and out of the country. My place of refuge could not be hidden from the magician. As soon as he had overrun my father’s principality, it occurred to him to capture me, and in view of his black magic this was not hard for him to do. My uncle, the count, was passionately fond of hunting, and I often rode with him to the chase. When this was the case, all the knights at his court competed in offering me the best horse.

“One day an unknown head groom crowded up to me with a magnificent dapple-grey horse and asked me,

in his master's name, to mount it and regard it as my property. When I inquired who his master might be, he begged me to excuse him from answering until I had tested the horse; but said he would gladly tell me after my return from the hunt, if he found I did not disdain the gift. I could not very well refuse this offer; besides, the horse was so splendidly harnessed that it blinded the eyes of the whole court. Gold and precious stones and the richest embroidery had been lavished on its purple saddle-cloth. A red silk bridle ran from its jaws to its neck. Curb-bit and stirrups were of solid gold, thickly encrusted with rubies. I swung myself into the saddle and was vain enough to think that I looked well on my mount. The gait of this noble steed was so light and easy that it hardly seemed to touch the ground with its hoofs. It rose like a bird over ditches and hedges, and the most daring horsemen could not follow it. A white deer which I had started early during the hunt, and which I pursued, led me deep into the forest, and separated me from the other huntsmen. At last, in order not to lose my way, I gave up the white deer and tried to ride back to the meeting-place we had agreed upon. But now the dapple-grey steed refused to obey me; it reared, shook its mane and grew wild and restive. I tried to soothe it, but that very moment I saw with horror that the horse had turned into a horrible feathered monster beneath me. Its fore hoofs had



spread out into a pair of wings, its neck had become longer, a broad beak had grown out of its head, and the first thing I knew I was seated on a long-legged hippogryph, which took a little run and then rose in the air. In less than an hour's time it set me down in front of the steel portal of an ancient castle, here in the forest.

"My first terror, from which I had not as yet recovered, was increased when I caught sight of the same head groom who had brought me the dapple-grey horse in the morning, and who now drew near in a respectful manner to lift me from the saddle. Dumb with terror and anger, I allowed myself to be led in silence through a number of splendid apartments to a company of ladies beautifully dressed, who greeted me as their mistress, and placed themselves at my service. All waited on me with the greatest devotion, but not one of them would tell me where I was or in whose power.

"I then gave myself up to a silent despair which was soon interrupted. Zornebock, the evil magician, suddenly lay at my feet in the shape of a yellow gipsy, and begged me to love and marry him. I answered him as seemed right for me to answer the slayer of my father. The sorcerer was savage and unmannerly, his heart was filled with rage; yet I dared his rage and begged him to carry out his threats, destroy the palace and let me be buried beneath its ruins. But the mon-

ster quickly left me, and gave me a short time in which to think matters over.

“Seven days later he renewed his hateful attentions. I repulsed them with scorn, and he rushed raging from the room. Not long after the ground shook beneath my feet, and the castle seemed to have rolled into an abyss. I sank down on my sofa and became unconscious. The magician’s terrible voice woke me from my death-like sleep: ‘Awake, lovely sleeper,’ he said, ‘from your seven years’ slumber, and tell me whether the flight of time has made you feel more kindly toward your faithful slave? If you can give me the least little glimmer of hope, this gloomy grotto shall turn into a temple of joy!’

“I did not honor the wretched sorcerer with a word or a look, but only veiled my face and wept silently. My sorrow seemed to move him: he begged, pleaded, lamented loudly, and writhed like a worm at my feet. Finally his patience gave out. He leaped up quickly and said: ‘Very well, seven years from now we will talk matters over again!’

“Then he replaced the alabaster tablet on its pedestal, and the sleep I could not resist again weighed down my eyes until the cruel monster once more disturbed my repose.

“‘Heartless one,’ he said this time, ‘if you continue to show yourself cruel to me, at least spare your brothers! My faithless head groom told them of your

fate and, though I have punished the traitor, they marched against me with horse and foot. The poor wretches thought to tear you from my hand, but my hand was too strong for them, and they are now regretting their foolishness in the shape of various beasts in this enchanted forest.'

"Such a miserable falsehood, spoken to undermine my constancy, only made me despise the magician the more. I answered him with the most bitter scorn and contempt. 'Wretched creature,' then cried the furious pagan, 'your fate is sealed! You shall sleep as long as the invisible powers obey this talisman!'

"Once more he raised the alabaster tablet to its pedestal, and the magic sleep robbed me of consciousness. You, noble knight, have awakened me from my death-like slumber by shattering the talisman. Yet I do not understand by what means you have been able to do this, nor how you have been able to withstand the magician. Zornebock must be dead, for otherwise you could not have shattered the talisman without suffering from it."

The charming Hildegarde was quite right in supposing that Zornebock was dead. The monster had made a foray into the Bohemian land, over which the Princess Libussa, who was descended from the fairies, then reigned. In the arts of magic, Zornebock was a mere child compared to the famous Bohemian queen. She quickly got the better of him by her enchantments,



so that he had to flee the battle-field, and was slain by one of her doughty knights, to whom she had given magic weapons against which Zornebock's spells were of no avail.

Once the beautiful Hildegarde had finished, Reinald told her of his adventures. When he spoke of the three enchanted princes of the forest, his brothers-in-law, she was much surprised. For now she saw that Zornebock had spoken the truth. Reinald was about to end his tale when the whole mountains re-echoed with great cries of joy and triumph. A little later three companies of horsemen broke out of the forest, at the head of which Hildegarde recognized her brothers and Reinald his sisters. The magic enchantments of the forest had been broken. After many embraces and exclamations of pleasure the caravan of the disenchanted ones left the horrible wilderness, and hastened to the old count's hunting castle. Thence messengers were sent post-haste to the count's residence to announce the glad news that his children had arrived.

When the messengers got there the court had just gone into mourning for young Count Reinald, who had been given up for dead. His sorrowing mother was interested only in giving him a splendid funeral. But the glad news brought about an immediate change. All sorrow turned to joy, and in a couple of days the venerable parents had the delight of embracing their

children and grandchildren. Amid all the festivities which marked the happy reunion, that which attracted most attention was Reinald's wedding to the beautiful Hildegarde. A whole year went by in constantly changing pleasures and pastimes.

At last the three princes decided that if they did nothing but amuse themselves for too long a time, the courage and daring of their knights and esquires would suffer. Besides, the count's residence was too small to hold so many courts and courtiers; and the three sons-in-law prepared to depart. Reinald, the heir, would not leave his aged parents again, and stayed with them to the end. Albert the Bear bought the lordship of Ascania, and founded the city of Bernburg; Edgar the Eagle took his way to the land of Helvetia, beneath the shadow of the towering Alps, and there built Aarburg on a nameless river which has since been called after the city; Ufo the Dolphin made an armed inroad into Burgundy, conquered part of that kingdom, and called the conquered province the Dauphinate.

And just as the three princes recalled the memory of their enchantment in the names of the cities and families they founded, so they borrowed the animals in whose form they were once enchanted for their coats-of-arms. That is why the arms of the city of Bernburg show a bear with a golden crown; those of Aarburg a golden eagle; and those of the Dauphinate a sea fish to this very day. The wonderful pearls, however,

which are now scattered all over the earth, and are supposed to be oriental, originally came from the enchanted pond in the magic forest, and were once kept in the three linen sacks.



## THE THREE WAVES

ONCE upon a time there was a little cabin-boy by the name of Thomas, who served his uncle aboard a fishing bark of Déva. The boy was an orphan and his uncle, the captain of the fishing bark, had adopted him. Thomas was about sixteen years old and his best friend aboard the bark was another lad of the same age, named Bilinch. Little Thomas enjoyed his work aboard ship, and when he was ashore he was no less happy; for his aunt by marriage was kind to him and so was his cousin Marie, who was as gentle and good as an angel.

But that winter when his uncle took little Thomas to sea with him for the first time, he and his crew had the worst kind of luck. In vain they cast their nets in the best places, the fishes they drew up were either dead or so small as to be worthless; while the other fishing vessels caught such quantities of fish that they had to throw half of them back into the water again. And thus it went all season long; though the bark carried the best sailors and fishermen of the whole coast, from Maihicaco to Cape Figuier, they caught hardly anything at all either with net or line, though they worked as hard as ever they could.

One night when the fishing bark was lying at the wharf at Maspé, ready to put out to sea, Thomas and Bilinch, seeing that they still had several hours to wait, lay down on deck to take a nap, and soon fell fast asleep. Suddenly Thomas was awakened by his comrade, who gave his arm a tug. And when he saw how frightened Bilinch looked, he at once asked him what was the matter.

"Did you see them?" said Bilinch, his eyes filled with terror. "See who?" asked Thomas. "Them—Marie and—the other woman? Thomas, let us run away! We must not stay on this bark!"

"Nonsense," cried Thomas; "here come the men! We will be putting out to sea in a few minutes."

But before he could stop him, Bilinch had leaped from the deck to the wharf, and started to run toward the village. On his way he met the captain and the sailors, and when he saw them he flung himself on the ground and cried: "No, no, I cannot go with you! I will not sail with the bark!"

A sailor raised him up, took him by the ear, and, pushing him ahead of him, thrust him into the bark.

"What is the trouble?" asked Thomas' uncle.

"Young lazybones says he won't go fishing to-day; he'd rather go bird-hunting."

"What do you mean, Bilinch?" asked the captain, while the poor boy, kneeling at his feet, begged him not to make him go along. The sailors, who thought

he was only trying to shirk his work, made fun of him; but Thomas, who knew that his friend was troubled, spoke to his uncle and said he feared he was not well.

Then the captain, who was a kind-hearted man, said to Bilinch: "Come, my boy, calm yourself and tell me why you do not wish to go fishing with us as you always do."

"O captain, I cannot tell you why; but I swear I cannot go along to-day, and you must not make me do so."

"That's not sense, my lad," answered the captain. "You have hired out for the season, and there is no reason why you should miss a day unless you have a good cause."

"I have a good reason, master; the best of reasons, but—"

"Well, if you have such a good reason, let me hear it."

"I have heard that if I go to sea to-day I am certain to be drowned."

"How would you be drowned?"

"In a shipwreck."

"Then if you drown, our bark will sink with you?"

"That is what I believe, and that is why you should not put out to sea in the bark to-day."

"My boy, my boy, this is all folly! Either you are making fun of us or there is something important you are hiding. If such be the case, you should tell us



who told you, and to what danger we are exposed."

"But, captain, that is just what I cannot tell you!"

"Very well, then you must take the same chance that we take."

"Spare me, captain; do not make me go along!"

"Silence, you rascal," said Thomas' uncle, for he was angry; "your life is worth no more than our own!"

Then, taking the tiller in his hand, the captain gave the signal to go with a deep voice: "All together, lads! *Arràun mutillak!*"

At the same moment thirty oars dipped into the water and the bark began to move. After she had made some headway, Bilinch, who still lay at the captain's feet, begged him to stop, saying he would tell all he knew.

So the captain gave the order to ship oars, the sailors raised them from the water, and the bark stopped softly opposite Urazandi. Then the captain seated himself and said to Bilinch, who was weeping bitterly:

"Come, Bilinch, calm yourself and tell us your story."

"That I will do, master," said the cabin-boy, "and God grant that no evil befall us!"

"Last night, when Thomas and I put everything to rights for to-day, we had finished our work in about two hours' time. So we lay down on the main deck

and in a few minutes Thomas was fast asleep. My own eyes were just about to close when I was suddenly awakened by two ghosts, in the form of two women, who seemed to have fallen from the skies. I was so terribly frightened by the sight that I was dumb with horror, could not move an inch, and hardly dared to breathe. That was what saved me, for they leaned over us and looked at us carefully. Thinking that I was asleep like Thomas, they then danced a fantastic dance all around us. And when they had danced enough, the older phantom said to the other one: 'Let them sleep, let them sleep! That is what we want. They will not wake up now until I give them leave.'

"At the same time I felt that the whole ship was being raised up into the air and was moving through it. And having moved for some time through the air we came softly to earth, and grounded under the heavily-leaved branches of an immense olive-tree. The two women then came over to us and looked at us attentively for a few minutes, then leaped from the deck and I lost sight of them.

"In spite of the terrible fear which filled me, I was so curious that I could not help opening my eyes to see what had become of them. I raised myself on my elbow, caught hold of a branch which was in the way, and carefully cut it off and hid it beneath a board. Then I looked out, and though it was very dark, I saw that we were in an immense forest of olive-trees, at one

end of which I thought I could dimly make out figures dancing a wild dance in a circle.

"It must be a witches' dance, I thought to myself, and was just about to wake up Thomas, when I heard something which sounded like footsteps drawing near. Thinking it was the two witches returning, I lay down again and did not make a move. Sure enough, I was right. After having looked us over again to make sure we were still sleeping, they re-entered the bark, which once more moved off, and in a few minutes brought us back to the spot we had left, that is, the wharf at Maspé.

"After having anchored the bark, the older witch said: 'My daughter, now we can bid them farewell for good and all.'

" 'For good and all? What do you mean?'

" 'For good and all, I tell you, for you will never see this bark or a single member of its crew again. In two hours' time they will all be lying at the bottom of the sea.'

" 'But the sea is as smooth as oil.'

" 'That makes no difference. As soon as they have doubled the Arrangatzi Cape I will make three immense waves rise from the water, the first a wave of milk, the second a wave of tears, and the third a wave of blood. They may escape the first and second waves; but there is nothing in the world that can save them from the third.'



“ ‘How you hate them!’

“ ‘You cannot be a witch without hating. I have persecuted them all winter long, driving away the fish from their nets, but my power to trouble ends to-morrow evening, and I would like to settle my score with them by burying them all beneath the waves.’

“ ‘And you will not spare a single one?’

“ ‘Not one, not a single one, for you must not forget that you and I are witches, and that we must hate and despise all others without exception, especially those who love us the best.’

“ ‘Then let them meet their fate. But suppose that some lucky chance keeps them from putting to sea to-day?’

“ ‘Silence, foolish daughter! That is impossible. They are bound to set out and perish. There is but one way they might escape from the danger which threatens them. But they do not know what it is, and they shall never know.’

“ ‘And what is the one way of escape, mother?’

“ ‘To fling a harpoon into the middle of the third wave, the wave of blood. For this third wave will be myself. I will be hidden beneath its waters, though they cannot see me, and a blow which struck this wave would pierce my heart.’

“ ‘O mother, suppose they came to know it!’

“ ‘That can never be, for you only know the secret, and I am sure you will not tell them. Thus they will

never learn it, and they shall all belong to me. At our next witches' sabbath there will be none who can boast a feat equal to mine!

"With these words she turned toward the bark and cried: 'You may now awake!' Then both of them vanished with great bursts of laughter.

"When I saw they had gone, I woke Thomas and was about to tell him what had happened to me when the bells began to chime—"

Bilinch stopped talking and it was easy to imagine how all those in the bark felt. Yet some of the sailors did not believe a word he said, and others cried that the boy had had a nightmare, and made fun of him.

"Tell me something," Bilinch then said to them; "is there a single one of you who has ever seen olive wood within ten miles from Maspé?"

And when they said they had not, Bilinch felt about beneath the boards, and then pulled out an olive branch which he shook in the air. "Do you see that? That is the branch I cut when I raised my head. I hid it here so you would have to believe what I said, and admit that the two witches were not a dream. And if any of you want to laugh at me, first tell me where I could have found a branch like this one in the short space of time that Thomas was sleeping? That was the only chance I could have had to cut the branch, for I was working beside him all the rest of the night!"

No one could deny such proof, for it was a fact that no olive wood grew anywhere within ten miles' distance. So the fatal branch passed from hand to hand in silence, while all murmured with horror: "Witches, witches!"

After a few moments of confusion, during which some wanted to head back for shore, and others wished to give Arrangatzi a wide berth, amid a clamor of shouts and arguments, the captain rose, seized the helm and cried in a loud voice: "Silence!"

As soon as calm had been restored, he added, turning to Thomas: "Thomas, take the harpoon! Stand at the prow, keep your eyes open, and your arm firm. When I give the word, fling the harpoon straight into the wave. You others, to the oars! Row, row! *Ar-ràun mutillak!*"

Under the power of the oars behind the bark it shot rapidly through the waves. The trembling glow of dawn floated over the surface of the ocean, which lay motionless, unstirred by the least breath of air or the slightest movement of the waters. The bark sped on, and it did not seem to the sailors as though it were moving; instead the trees and bushes along the shore seemed to fly by in the strangest manner, taking fantastic shapes in the thick morning mist. When the bark doubled the Cross Point and drew near the bar, the latter seemed as calm and undisturbed as though



the waters were sleeping. In a moment the bark had reached the bar, and on no side was there any sign of danger, yet all felt ill at ease.

Suddenly, and without a man on board having been able to see whence it had come, no more than two fathoms away an enormous wave, as high as a mountain and white as snow, hung over the ship.

"*Geldi!* Attention!" cried the captain and looked at Thomas, who closed his eyes, for the white water dazzled him.

"It is true," murmured the captain, whose voice trembled a little. "It is the wave of milk!"

"The wave of milk!" cried all the sailors.

"Straight ahead!" now shouted the captain.

The thirty oars struck the water together and the bark flung itself upon the white wave. Its prow disappeared in a shower of foam, and then the danger was past. Yet before the oars had been dipped for the third time, another tremendous wave, even higher than the first, rose before them. It was as clear as crystal and threw off a vapor which burned the eyes.

As before, the bark hung suspended over the abyss for a moment, and then the wave which it over-rode rushed on to break along the sands of Ondarbeltz.

"The wave of tears!" said Thomas's uncle, looking at him, and added: "*Gertu, Tomas!* Keep your weather-eye open!" Then turning to the crew, he added: "All together now, *aurrera mutillac!*"

The bark shot forward, and the fatal spot had nearly been passed, when all on board saw the terrible wave of blood, covering the whole horizon, driving down upon them in the shape of a hideous crescent, which drew them within its two horns as though by some magic power. Not a man on board but felt his own blood run cold. Little Thomas could hear his heart beat as he stood at the prow, the harpoon clenched in his hand.

*"Orri gogor! Straight in the middle!"* cried his uncle, making the sign of the cross. Thomas hesitated, but only for a moment. Then he closed his eyes and, with a hand that hardly trembled, cast the harpoon straight into the middle of the wave of blood.

At once a terrible wailing sounded over the sea, while the wave, cut in two by the bark's prow, flung itself furiously against the coast and covered the whole shore with a crimson foam.

For the rest of the day the crew of the fishing bark wore themselves out emptying their nets, which were filled with fish wherever they flung them over the side. So great was their catch that it made up for all their losses during the winter. And Bilinch was praised and petted by every one on board. When the bark reached the wharf at Maspé, it was crowded by people who had come to congratulate the captain on his good fortune, for the news of his catch had been brought in by other ships which had not been so lucky.

Yet two were missing in the crowd. The captain could not make out the figures of his wife and his daughter Marie among those who had come down to meet the bark. And when he entered his cottage there lay his wife on her bed, with her head turned toward the wall. When she heard his step she turned, looked at him with an expression of the deepest hatred, and then passed away. Meanwhile Thomas, also on his way home, met his cousin Marie a few steps from the door. But her usual kind and angelic expression had undergone a frightful change. Her face wore a hideous look of hatred. Trembling, the boy cried: "What has come over you, Marie?" But she only answered, "Be accursed, murderer!" and then suddenly disappeared before his eyes.

Thomas now began to realize the truth; but even yet he would not admit it to himself. Hurrying down to the wharf, he found Bilinch.

"Who were the two witches you saw the other night, Bilinch?" he asked.

But Bilinch only shook his head and said not a word.

"Who were they?" Thomas repeated, impatiently.

"Marie and her mother," whispered Bilinch, sadly.

Thomas' poor uncle, deeply grieved by the death of his wife and Marie's strange disappearance, did not recover from the shock for a long time. But in the end he gave his whole love to his nephew, Thomas, and before he died had the satisfaction of knowing that he



was one of the best and luckiest fishing-captains of the whole coast. Thomas and Bilinch remained faithful friends and companions their life long; but never again did they see or hear any witches, so it is quite possible that the two of whom this story tells were the very last known of in the Basque country.

## THE FLUTEPLAYER OF THE TAIHUA MOUNTAINS

**I**N the days that have long since passed, there was a Prince of Tsin who had an only daughter. When she first saw the light, his servants brought the prince a curious rock, which, when it was split, disclosed a lump of green jade-stone. So on his little daughter's first birthday a table with many gifts, including the precious jade-stone, was prepared for the child; but the stone was the only thing she would take from the table, and the only thing with which she would play. And since she would not allow it to leave her hands, they named her "Toys-With-Jewels." Day by day, as she grew up, she became lovelier in face and in form than any other maiden; and since she played beautifully on the shepherd pipe and understood how to compose melodies without ever having taken a lesson, the Prince of Tsin had his most skilled artisans carve a shepherd pipe out of the green jade-stone. When the princess blew it, it sounded like the singing of the phoenix; and her father, who dearly loved the child, had a many-storied palace built for her which was called the Phoenix Tower. When Toys-With-Jewels had grown up, the Prince of Tsin spoke of finding a

husband for her. But the maiden said: "Let it be no other man but one who knows how to blow the shepherd pipe sweetly, that his playing and mine may sound together!" So the prince had his people seek everywhere for a man who could play the shepherd pipe, but without success.

Now, one night when Toys-With-Jewels was in the Phoenix Tower, she rolled back the curtains in her room, and saw that the heavens were clear and cloudless, and the moonlight was radiant as a mirror. She ordered her maids to light the incense, took up her shepherd pipe of green jade, and, seated at the window, commenced to play. The tones of her melody were so clear and high that it seemed as though they must rise to the very heavens. A faint breeze stirred continuously, and suddenly she noticed that someone outside the Tower was accompanying her melodies. Now near, now far the music sounded, much to Toys-With-Jewels' astonishment. When she stopped playing the music of her unknown partner stopped as well, only its overtones trembled for a moment in soft echoes on the air. Then Toys-With-Jewels rose and stood in her window; and a sadness as though she had lost something precious came over her. Thus she stared out of the window until midnight, till the moon had gone down, and the incense had burned out. Then she laid the shepherd pipe on her bed and reluctantly went to sleep.



And while she slept she dreamed that the gate of the South-Western Heavens opened wide, and that a cloud-radiance of five colors, glowing and shining like the day, streamed forth from it. And a handsome youth, with a headdress of stork feathers, came riding down from the heavens on a phoenix, stood before the Phoenix Tower and said to her: "I am the spirit of the Taihua Mountains, and your destined husband! On the Day of Mid-Autumn we shall meet again!" He spoke not another word; but drawing a flute of some precious red stone from the girdle about his hips, leaned against the balcony and began to play. Then the bright-colored phoenix he had been riding beat its wings and danced, and the singing of the phoenix and the tones of the flute sounded together in harmony through all the heights and depths. Sweetly their music fell upon the ear of the princess and filled it with an entrancing echo, till Toys-With-Jewels' soul was troubled and her thoughts grew confused. "What is the name of this melody?" she asked. "It is the first part of the Air of the Taihua Mountains," replied the handsome youth. "Is it possible to learn it?" asked Toys-With-Jewels. "Are you not already my promised wife? Why should I not be able to teach it to you?" said the youth and he went toward her and took her hand. This so terrified the maiden that she awoke, her eyes still filled with her dream.

When day had dawned, she told her dream to the

Prince, her father. He repeated it to his minister Meng Ming, and at once sent him out to the Taihua Mountains to investigate the matter. In the mountains Meng Ming found a village elder who said: "About the middle of July a strange being appeared in this neighborhood. He has woven a hut of reeds for himself on the sparkling hill of stars, and lives there quite alone. Every day he descends in order to buy the juice of the grape, which he drinks in solitude. He plays his flute without interruption until evening, and its tones may be heard throughout the countryside. Whoever hears them forgets all weariness. Whence the stranger comes none of us know."

Then Meng Ming began to climb the mountain, and when he had reached the sparkling hill of stars, he saw a man who wore a headdress of stork's feathers. His face seemed to be carved from a precious stone, his lips were red and the expression of his countenance was so free and so divinely happy that he seemed to be living in a world unknown to man. Meng Ming at once suspected that this was not an ordinary human being. He bowed and asked his name. "My father's name is Schao," replied the youth, "and my given name is Sche. But who are you, and why do you come here?" "I am the minister of this land," replied Meng Ming. "My lord and master is about to seek a husband for his daughter. Since she blows the shepherd pipe with great art, he will take none other for his son-in-law



but one who is able to play together with her. Now the prince has heard that you are well versed in music, and he thirsts to look upon you. And so he has sent me to bring you to him." Said the youth, "I know but little of the various keys, and aside from this negligible flute-playing I am no artist. I dare not follow your command." "Let us seek my master together," replied Meng Ming, "and then all will be made clear."

So Meng Ming took the youth back with him in his carriage, first made his report and then brought Schao Sche to the prince that he might pay homage to him. The prince sat in the Phoenix Tower, and Schao Sche flung himself at his feet and said: "I am a dweller in the open and on the hills, and an altogether ignorant man. I know nothing of court ceremonies, and beg that you will treat me mercifully and forgive me!" The Prince of Tsin studied Schao Sche, and noticing the free and happy expression of his countenance, took great pleasure in his arrival. He made him sit down beside him and asked: "I hear that you know how to play the flute admirably. Can you also blow the shepherd pipe?" "I can only play the flute, but not the shepherd pipe," replied Schao Sche. "I had been looking for a man who could play the shepherd pipe, but the flute is not the same thing," said the prince. Turning to Meng Ming he added sadly, "He is no partner for my daughter," and commanded that he be led away. But at that moment Toys-With-Jewels sent









a serving maid to the prince with the message: "Flute and shepherd pipe both obey the same law of music. If your guest can play the flute so admirably, why not let him show his art?" So the Prince of Tsin ordered Schao Sche to play, and the latter took up his flute, made of a crimson precious stone, a radiant jewel, whose crimson gleam was mirrored in the eyes of those present. It was truly a rare treasure. Schao Sche played the first movement of his air, and slowly a clear wind arose. With the second movement colored clouds came flying from all four points of the heavens; and when he played the third, white storks could be seen dancing opposite each other in the skies, peacocks sat in pairs in the trees, and hundreds of birds of various kinds accompanied his music with the harmony of their song, until, after a time, they dispersed.

The Prince of Tsin was delighted. In the meantime Toys-With-Jewels had witnessed the whole miracle from behind a curtain and said: "In truth, this is the very man who should play with me!" And the prince asked Schao Sche: "What is the difference between the shepherd pipe and flute?" "In the beginning," replied Schao Sche, "the shepherd pipe was invented. But then men found that greater simplicity was possible, and out of the pipe of four reeds they made the pipe of one reed, the flute." "And how is it," again asked the Prince of Tsin, "that you are able to lure the birds to your side with your playing?" "The tones of



the flute resemble the song of the phœnix," returned Schao Sche, "and the phœnix is the king of all the hundreds of kinds of birds. Hence they all believe that the phœnix is singing and hasten up. Once, when the Emperor Sun discovered the beautiful tones of the Schao Sche mode, the phœnix itself appeared. So if it is possible to lure the phœnix by means of music, why not the other birds?" The Prince of Tsin, noticing that the speaker's voice was full and sonorous, grew more and more content and said: "I have a favorite daughter whose name is Toys-With-Jewels. She has so great an understanding of music that I would not willingly give her to a tone-deaf man. Hence she shall be your wife."

Schao Sche's face grew sober, he bowed a number of times and said: "I am a peasant from the mountains. How might I venture to marry a princess?" "When my daughter was but a child," answered the prince, "she swore that only a player of the shepherd pipe should be her husband. Your flute, however, penetrates heaven and earth and conquers every living creature. It is sweeter than the shepherd pipe. Then, too, my daughter once dreamed a dream. This day is the Day of Mid-Autumn, and the will of heaven is plain. Do not disobey it!" Then Schao Sche cast himself on the ground and spoke his thanks.

Now the prince wished his soothsayers to select an auspicious day for the nuptials. But the soothsayers

said: "This is the Mid-Autumn Day, no time is more propitious. The moon shines full in the heavens, and all men on earth breathe joyfully!" So the prince at once had a bath prepared, and had Schao Sche led to it, that he might cleanse himself. And when he had changed his simple garments for rich, silken robes, he was taken to the Phœnix Castle, where he was married to Toys-With-Jewels. The following day the Prince appointed Schao Sche a mandarin; but he paid no attention to his duties, in spite of his official rank, and spent all his time in the Phœnix Tower. He ate no cooked food and only, from time to time, drank a few goblets of the juice of the grape. From him Toys-With-Jewels learned the true secret of breathing, so that in the end she too was able to live without food. In addition he taught her a melody by means of which one might lure the phœnix.

Half a year had gone by when, one night, the pair were playing together in the moonlight. Suddenly there appeared a violet-colored phœnix, which stationed itself at the left of the Phœnix Tower, and a crimson dragon, which uncoiled itself at its right. Then Schao Sche said: "In the upper world I was a spirit. Then the Ruler of the Heavens sent me down, when the books of history had been disordered, so that I might order them. Thus, in the seventeenth year of the reign of the Emperor Djou Schuan-Wang on earth, I was born as a son in the family of Schao. Up to the

death of Schuan-Wang, those who wrote the histories of the land were incapable. But I arranged the books of history from the beginning of time to the present day, so that they might be continued. And because of my labors with the history books the people called me Schao Sche. But all this happened more than a hundred years ago. The Ruler of the Heavens then ordered me to rule on the Hua Hills as a mountain spirit. Yet, since this marriage with you was already predestined, he brought us together by means of the tones of the flute. Now, however, we need no longer remain on earth, for dragon and phoenix have come to bear us away. We must depart!"

Toys-With-Jewels wished to bid her father farewell; but Schao Sche said: "No, those who wish to become spirits must turn away their thoughts from all earthly things. How could you then still cling to a relative?" So Schao Sche mounted the crimson dragon and Toys-With-Jewels the violet phoenix, and they rode away together from the Phoenix Tower through the clouds. And that same night the phoenix was heard singing in the mountains of Taihua.

When the maid of the princess reported what had happened to the Prince of Tsin the following morning, he at first lost all power of speech. And then he wailed: "So it is true that spirits and genies really appear? If a dragon or phoenix were to come this moment to carry me off, I would leave my land with as



little regret as I would fling away an old shoe!" He sent out many men to the Taihua Mountains to look for the two musicians, but they had disappeared for good and all, and were never seen or heard of again.

## FLOWER OF THE GARDENS

ONCE upon a time, hundreds of years ago, the Moors ruled the beautiful land of Valencia, and proudest among the proud sultans who reigned over the city of that name was Muhamed ben Abderrahman ben Tahir the Great, who was famed for his wealth and power.

Now the Sultan Muhamed ben Abderrahman had an only daughter, the fame of whose beauty had travelled to the farthest boundaries of the Moslem lands. So fond was this lovely girl of the flowering meadows and the fragrant green woods, that the poets of her day never spoke of her by her real name; but called her the Flower of the Gardens. And by the name of Flower of the Gardens she was known to all Valencia.

Her father, the Sultan Muhamed, loved her so greatly that he would have given her the very eyes out of his head had she wanted them. To please her he built wonderful palaces of marble and jasper, glowing with gold and silver and precious stones, and called in the most skillful gardeners of his kingdom to plan pleasure-gardens with flowers, fragrant shrubs and running waters for her delight. There was nothing he could refuse his beloved Flower of the Gardens.

Yet none of her other palaces pleased the sultan's daughter as much as the high marble tower built especially for her within the very walls of the *alcazaba* or fortress of the city. From this tower she could look out over the wide Valencian plain and at its foot the waters of the torrent sang—just as they sing to this day—their never-ending song. And from her marble tower Flower of the Gardens took delight in coming down in the mornings with a gilded vessel made of the sweet-smelling clay known as *bucaro*, to drink at the running spring. At other times she would walk along the narrow road which bordered the precipice between the two mountains, on one of which the *alcazaba* was built, and pass hours and hours looking at the strange stairway cut into the living rock, which the people called "The Fairies' Stairway." Then her childish thoughts would turn to all sorts of tales of magic and enchantment.

As she grew older the Sultan Abderrahman Ben Tahir made up his mind that the wisdom of Flower of the Gardens should equal her beauty, seeing that she was naturally gifted far beyond all the maidens of the Orient.

And at once envoys and emissaries set out from Valencia to travel all over the world, in search of the wisest among all the wise men on earth. And at the end of a long time, after having passed through many countries and gone to the very limits of the East, the



sultan's envoys returned bringing with them a venerable old man with a long white beard, who was said to be the wisest of all wise men. This ancient man was the teacher of the princess, and from him the lovely Flower of the Gardens learned the arts and sciences, history and poetry, the language of the flowers and of the stars, and even those secret and occult magic arts which are hidden from ordinary mortals. For the white-bearded old wise man who taught the princess was neither more nor less than a magician, for whom few things were impossible.

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Some years went by, and at the end of that time Flower of the Gardens had become as celebrated for her wisdom as for her beauty, and the fame of her loveliness and learning had spread to the most distant countries. Many of the greatest lords of the other Moorish kingdoms rode miles to see her, and beg her advice in matters of state, and at the foot of her marble tower in the *alcazaba* one could see hundreds of richly trapped horses, whose masters, Moors and Christians alike, were paying court to the beautiful daughter of the Sultan Muhamed.

Yet she treated all men with the same scorn. For the truth is that the lovely Moorish princess, though she grew wiser and wiser each day, also became more silent and melancholy; until she fled the company of all human beings, even that of her father, who loved

her so tenderly. At the same time her venerable teacher grew more and more ill-humored, irritable and grouchy.

The Sultan Muhamed, who grieved to see his daughter so sad, tried to cheer her up by taking her in a splendid litter, with great pomp and ceremony, to visit the gay cities of Andalusia, and there were jousts and knightly games in her honor at the brilliant courts of Cordova and Granada. When they returned he made her new gifts of black and white slaves, jewels, stuffs and other riches, and had newer and handsomer palaces and gardens built for her. But he could not win a single smile from his lovely daughter. All she wished, so she said, was to be allowed to sit at the foot of her marble tower in the *alcazaba*, and look at the mysterious Stairway of the Fairies, whose steps were cut in the living rock.

It was then that the Sultan Muhamed began to suspect that the old magician was to blame for his daughter's melancholy. He had him brought into his presence, and told him he would hang him from the *alcazaba* battlements if he did not immediately reveal the cause of the princess' grief, and find a remedy for it.

The magician made so low a bow that his white beard swept the floor and replied:

"Powerful sultan! Your daughter's sadness is incurable. You told me to teach her all that I myself knew, and I have done as you wished. Yet, while her

brain and mind have grown and developed, her heart has dried up. So far as learning goes, she knows more than the wisest wise men and the greatest kings. But there is no love in her heart, and for this reason—because her heart is empty of love—her knowledge is useless. She lives only in her knowledge, and since she has learned all there is to know, she now feels a great emptiness, and wishes to know what none can teach her. She wishes to become a fairy. But I am no *djinn*, and I cannot turn her into a fairy. And so, my lord sultan—whom Allah protect!—your daughter grows more sad and melancholy day by day, and I am unable to cure her.”

At once the sultan flew into a rage.

“Wretched impostor!” he shouted, “I had you brought from a far land so that you would help make my daughter happy. I wished you to teach her your science as the one thing she needed to be perfect. Instead you have broken her heart by making her wish for the impossible. And now, tell me something. You, too, wander unhappily about the gardens of the palace. Why are you dissatisfied?”

“My body, O sultan,” replied the aged man, “is old and weary! I know that I have not very long to live, and before I die I should like to see the skies of my native land once more.”

“Ah, and you want to leave Valencia? You wish me to set you free?” asked the sultan.



"Liberty," said the venerable wise man in a solemn tone of voice, "is the greatest happiness we know on earth."

"Be it as you wish. So far as I am concerned, I do not need you. If my daughter Flower of the Gardens gives you leave, then you are free."

But when the Moorish princess learned that her teacher had asked for his liberty, she hurried to her father and complained bitterly of him.

"Dearest lord and father, whom Allah have in his keeping!" she cried. "Do not allow this man to leave me. He only holds in his hands the cure for the sadness which consumes me. It is in order to avoid doing his duty that he begs to be set free. He possesses the secret of the fairies and will not tell me it. He could make me the happiest of all daughters of Islam, and yet, jealous of his knowledge, he wants to go away without curing my grief. Dear lord and father," she went on, "he knows the magic words which open the palace of the fairies which has been cut in the living rock of the mountain. The fortunate mortal who can make his way into that enchanted palace will become the richest and most powerful on earth. Why should he hide the magic words from me?"

The old magician raised his head, which had hung down on his breast while the princess was speaking.

"Those magic words, lord sultan, may lead to your eternal unhappiness!"

"There are steps cut in the rock which lead to the very portal of the fairy palace," continued the princess. "It is the Fairies' Stairway, lord father!"

"These steps were not cut for mortal feet to tread," said the old man.

But his daughter's words had excited the sultan's curiosity and greed. He threatened the old man from the Orient with life-imprisonment in a gloomy dungeon if he would not consent to reveal the magic words. And finally, the magician agreed to do so, not without warning them to obey all his orders, for if they delayed a single second in obeying them, they would be buried in the mysterious depths of the mountain, neither dead nor alive, to suffer for all eternity. The Sultan Muhamed and his daughter Flower of the Gardens promised the magician to obey him in all things, so it was settled that the following night, when the cock crowed twelve, they would meet him at the foot of the marble tower.

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And as they had said they would do so they did. Before the cock gave the signal that the midnight hour had arrived, the three—the sultan, the magician and the princess—were standing at the foot of the Fairies' Stairway. The old sage kept his eyes fixed on the stars, waiting for them to take a favorable position in the heavens. When that moment came, he lit a torch, which he had carried beneath his robe, drew out a very

ancient book whose yellowed pages were covered with fantastic letters and began to read slowly, in a medium tone of voice.

When he had finished the first page, a terrible rumbling, as though the mountain were opening, was heard. The Sultan Muhamed and his daughter, the princess, clung to each other; but without losing sight of the Fairies' Stairway. The magician, as though he had ears for nothing happening around him, continued to read without stopping. When he reached the end of the second page, another, even more terrible rumbling was heard, and the Flower of the Gardens and her father saw the outline of a great arched door, which seemed about to open, ~~stand~~ out against the rock. And when the old sage had turned the third page of the book, no rumbling was heard, as before; but the grinding of a heavy door whose bolts were being drawn. A deep crevice showed in the rock, and slowly grew in size as the magician pronounced the mysterious words of his ancient book.

As soon as the opening in the rock seemed large enough to let a man enter, the Sultan Muhamed flung himself forward to pass through the door into the dark interior; but his daughter, catching him by the arm, held him back: it was necessary to follow the magician's orders one by one. The latter continued reading until the portal had opened wide. Then he drew from his girdle a pipe with a golden mouthpiece, gave



a shrill whistle, and instantly Flower of the Gardens and the sultan her father found themselves in the Fairies' Palace.

As soon as they crossed the threshold, they thought they would swoon with delight. The light which flooded it with the clearest radiance was as bright as though thousands and thousands of lamps hung from the roof. Columns of rubies and emeralds supported arches of clouds which waved slightly in the air. The floor of the palace was formed of precious stones, and its walls of mother-of-pearl with reliefs in gold, and from them echoed a music as sweet as angel song.

It would be impossible to tell in mere words all the wonders which the Sultan Muhamed and his daughter Flower of the Gardens saw and admired in the Fairies' Palace. The delight which filled their hearts was such that it could not be spoken and thus, in the greatest joy and happiness an hour went by so swiftly that it seemed no longer than a minute. As soon as the hour was up, the old magician who had remained outside blew his golden whistle, and the sultan and his daughter found themselves swiftly carried out of the bowels of the mountain, the great door clanging behind them with a terrible crash.

Needless to say Flower of the Gardens was now almost beside herself with joy. She kissed her father a thousand times, hugged the old magician, and repeated over and over again that she was the happiest girl on

earth. Her old teacher, on the other hand, seemed gloomier than ever.

"Powerful sultan," he said, turning to Muhamed, "I have kept the promise I gave you. Do you now keep the one you gave me, and allow me to depart to die beneath the sky of my beloved native land."

"That is for Flower of the Gardens to decide," answered the sultan.

And Flower of the Gardens granted her old teacher his liberty on the condition that he make her a present of the ancient book and the golden whistle which had the power of opening the Fairies' Palace.

"They are yours, Flower of the Gardens," said her teacher. "Keep them as a remembrance of the poor old man who brought the light of knowledge to your darkened mind. But use them carefully and in moderation. Do not abuse your measureless power, and do not forget never to remain in the magic palace a minute over the hour."

Thus spoke the old magician with the long white beard, and after the Sultan Muhamed ben Abderrahman ben Tahir had loaded him with rich gifts, he took his way to those far countries where the stars are born at dawn.



That night Flower of the Gardens could not close her eyes, for her mind was filled with the marvels she had seen in the Fairies' Palace. No sooner had day

dawned than she took her gilded *bucaro*, the mysterious book with the yellowed pages, and the golden whistle and, accompanied by a slave girl, went to the precipice, at the foot of the steps cut in the living rock.

There she passed the whole day without eating or drinking, reading the book which was thousands of years old, and deciphering its curious signs one by one. A hundred times she climbed the steps, then turned and went down them again, beating the hard rock with her rosy little fists as she vainly tried to discover the spot where the night before, the arched doorway had opened.

At last night came and when, finally, the stars in their courses reached the place the ancient magician had pointed out to her, the Moorish princess opened her book and commenced to read the magic words. And again the mountain began to open, as it had done the preceding night, with such terrible rumblings and crashes that the hair of the frightened slave girl stood on end with horror. When at last the way was clear for her to enter, Flower of the Gardens thrust the *bucaro*, the book and the golden whistle into the slave girl's hands, and with a cry of joy, darted into the interior of the mountain.

Yet this time she did not return. Lost in admiration of its many enchanting wonders, the magic hour went by without her taking note of the passage of time. Suddenly the granite portals closed with a terrible



crash, and Flower of the Gardens was imprisoned in that palace without an outlet, world without end.

On the following morning, when the people in the *alcazaba* heard the wails of the slave girl, they hurried to tell the sultan what had happened. Then Muhamed Abderrahman ben Tahir, the most powerful sultan of all the Moorish lands, came forth sadly to search for his daughter, wringing his hands and tearing his hair. He went over every foot of the granite mountain, and it seemed to him that he could hear, coming from within the living rock, the sighs of his beloved daughter, Flower of the Gardens.

So the sultan called together great armies of men—the strongest and bravest in every land—with picks and shovels, to level the mountain to the ground. Yet all their labor was in vain. The hard granite resisted every effort they made, and after they had toiled for seven years it hardly showed the mark of their picks. Another seven years went by, and another and another, and then the Sultan Muhamed Abderrahman ben Tahir, the most powerful of all the Moorish kings, died of a broken heart at the foot of that mysterious mountain, in the centre of which still sighed his daughter Flower of the Gardens, the loveliest and wisest of all the maidens of Islam.

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To this very day you may see the Fairies' Stairway, not far from the city of Valencia, along the road known

as the Bosquet. But people no longer call it by that name. For it is said that the sighs and laments of Flower of the Gardens may still be heard at night, at the time when the stars are at their height. And some even claim that once in every hundred years the Moorish princess may be seen seated at the foot of the Stairway, waiting for some mortal as wise as her former teacher, the old magician with the long white beard, to pass that way and release her from her enchantment.

It is for this reason that these strange steps cut in the Bosquet Mountain are now known as "The Maiden's Stairway."

## PRINCE UNHOPED-FOR

ONCE upon a time there was a king and a queen who had no children, though they had been married for a number of years, and this was a cause of much sorrow to them.

Now the kingdom over which this king reigned was very, very large and the king did not always know what was going on in the distant provinces. One day, it occurred to him that perhaps the people in some of the far-off parts of the kingdom might have reason to complain of their governors, so he decided to travel to them and see for himself how matters stood. He knew his journey would take from eight to nine months, and gave orders that during that time no news should be sent him from the capital, because he did not want anyone to know just where he was. If he could surprise the governors of his provinces when he arrived in them, he would have a better chance of finding out whether or no they were honestly doing their duty.

The king set out on his journey exactly as he had planned, travelled in all the far places of his realm, looked into everything, correcting abuses, righting wrongs and seeing that justice was done to all. Then,



at the end of the ninth month, he took the road for home again.

He was not so very far from his capital when, passing through a stretch of desert land—it was in the middle of summer—he was seized with a raging thirst. At once he sent out his servants on all sides to see whether they could discover water, but they searched more than an hour in every direction and returned without having found a trace of it. Then the king himself set out to search the country, hoping that sooner or later he would find a spring.

Suddenly, in that bone-dry plain, where there had been no water as long as man could remember, a well caught his eye. The well-brink was quite moist; the well itself full of clear water, and on the surface of the water floated a cup of silver with a golden handle.

The king at once leaped down from his horse, laid his left hand on the brink of the well, and tried to seize the cup with his right. But it almost seemed as though the cup were alive. It quickly moved away from his hand, and then once more floated quietly on the water. Though a little frightened, the king again tried to catch it, sometimes with one hand, sometimes with the other; but in spite of all his efforts it continued to get away from him. Then he tried both hands, but the cup, diving like a fish, came up again a little ways off.

“There is a cup,” thought the king, “that will not be

of much use to me. Very well, I will do without it!"

And he leaned far over the brink of the well, and drank of the water and found it pure as crystal, and as cold as ice. While the king drank, his long beard sank into the water.

When he had satisfied his thirst he wished to rise again but something, he did not know what, was holding him by the beard. After having tried in vain to release himself, the king cried in a rage:

"Who are you? Let me go!"

"You ask who I am?" answered a voice from out of the well. "I am Kotschei, the king of the regions beneath the earth. I will not let you go until you promise to give me what you have at home, without knowing what you have there, and what you will find at home when you return, without having hoped to find it."

The king looked down the well. There he saw a monstrous head with great green eyes and a mouth split to the ears. Kotschei held the king's beard with the enormous crab's claws that served him for hands, and laughed an evil laugh.

"Anything I have and do not know about and anything I find on my return home without having hoped to find it, cannot amount to much," thought the king.

So he said in a loud tone of voice: "I agree to do what you ask."

The monster burst out laughing, gleamed for a moment like living flame, and then disappeared. And

with him disappeared the well, the water and the silver cup with the golden handle. The king found himself lying on the sun-baked soil. He rose, mounted his horse, rejoined his escort and continued on his way.

In the course of a few days he reached his capital, where the people crowded around to greet him, and he entered the courtyard of his palace in triumph. And there, on the terrace, stood the queen waiting for him, and in her arms she held a sleeping baby boy.

Then the king realized that heaven must have sent him the child only a short time before he reached home.

"So this," thought he, "was what I did not know I had, and did not hope to find when I returned home!" And he began to weep bitterly. Everyone was surprised to see his tears, but no one dared ask what caused them. He took the child into his arms and looked on its innocent little face with deep affection. Then he himself carried the boy back into the palace, and put him in his cradle. After that the king vainly tried to hide his anxiety. He worked at ruling his kingdom as he never had done before, but no matter what he did a dark thought never left him: it was the thought that some day Kotschei would demand his son from him.

Yet the weeks, months and years passed, and no one came to claim the child. Prince Unhoped-For, for that was the name which had been given him, grew up and became a handsome young man. Little by little



the king regained his former happy disposition, and there were moments when he entirely forgot his adventure by the well. But there was one who had not forgotten it.

One day the young prince, hunting in the forest, became separated from his suite and strayed into a dense thicket. Suddenly a monstrous old man, with great green eyes appeared before him.

"Prince Unhoped-For," he said, "you have kept me waiting for you a long time."

"And who are you?" answered the young man.

"That you shall soon know. When you have returned to your father, greet him from me, and tell him that I would like to have him settle his account with me. If he does not do so, he will live to regret it!"

With these words the monster disappeared. The prince turned his horse, rode back to the palace and told the king what had happened to him.

The king grew pale and revealed his terrible secret to his son.

"Do not despair, father," replied the young man. "The harm can be undone. I will find a way to make Kotschei give up his claim, which is based on a deceitful trick. I will go to him at once, and we shall see if he will dispose of me as he sees fit. And now I shall say farewell, because I am not sure that I shall return."

So the prince tenderly embraced his father and

mother, and told the latter why he was leaving her. His father gave him a suit of steel armor, a sabre and a horse, while his mother hung a golden cross around his neck. And when they had embraced him for a last time, with many tears, the young man set out on his journey, pushing on without any special place in view, for he felt sure that Kotschei would appear to him, sooner or later.

When the sun was going down he reached the seashore, and there, on the sands, he saw twelve garments such as young girls wear, as white as snow. Yet as far as the eye could reach in every direction there was not a sign of a soul in the water. Suspecting some mystery, and eager to clear it up, the prince seized one of the garments, left his horse to graze at will in the nearby meadows, and hid himself among the bushes.

No sooner had he hidden himself than a flock of white ducks which had been swimming about on the waves walked out on the sand. Eleven of them slipped into the garments, struck the sand with their webbed feet, and turning into beautiful young girls, at once disappeared. The twelfth—she was the youngest—could not make up her mind to come out of the water. She stretched out her white neck and looked around on every side. Suddenly she saw the king's son hiding in the bushes and called out to him in a human voice:

"Prince Unhoped-For, give me back my robe! I will show myself grateful if you do."

So the prince laid down her white robe on the sand, and withdrew in order not to molest the little white duck who was going to turn into a young girl.

As soon as she had entered her robe and regained her human shape, the girl came to him. She was marvelously beautiful. Holding out her hand to the young man she said in a melodious voice:

"I thank you, noble prince, for having granted my prayer. I am the youngest of the twelve daughters of Kotschei, who reigns over the kingdom beneath the earth. My father has been expecting you for a long time and is very angry with you. As soon as you meet Kotschei, fall on your knees and then, without paying any attention to his cries, his roars or his threats, walk bravely up to him. What will then happen is something you will know more about later. And now let us go."

She stamped on the ground with her little foot, the earth opened and both of them descended into the kingdom beneath the earth.

Soon they arrived at Kotschei's dwelling, a radiant palace which lighted up the kingdom beneath as the sun lights our own world. The prince boldly entered it and found himself in a great hall.

Kotschei, wearing a rich crown on his head, was seated on a throne of gold. His eyes shone like two great emeralds, and his arms ended in two enormous crab's claws. As soon as he saw him, Prince Unhoped-



For knelt respectfully. In vain Kotschei uttered the most terrible cries, which made the roof of the palace tremble; the prince, moving along on his knees, kept right on advancing toward his throne. And, when he was no more than two or three feet away, Kotschei burst out into shouts of laughter.

"You are lucky," said he, "to have made me laugh! I will allow you to live in my kingdom. However, first you must carry out three commands which I will give you. We will speak of them to-morrow, but now, since it is late, we will go to bed." So the prince was led off to a chamber which seemed to have been made ready for him, and there he slept very well.

The next morning Kotschei sent for him.

"Let us see what you can do," said he. "To-morrow night you must build me a marble palace, with crystal windows and a golden roof. The palace must be surrounded by splendid gardens and in the gardens there must be fountains and lakes. If you carry out my orders properly you shall be my friend, if not—off goes your head!"

After he had listened to this strange speech the prince returned to his room and began to think of the death awaiting him. Suddenly, as he sat there, lost in gloomy thoughts, a bee tapped at the window-pane and said:

"Let me in!"

He opened the window, the bee flew in and in an-

other moment Prince Unhoped-For saw Kotschei's daughter standing before him.

"A penny for your thoughts, Prince Unhoped-For!" she cried.

"I was thinking of your father, who has planned my death," he answered. "Have no fears, sleep in peace, and to-morrow morning, when you awake, you will find that your palace has been built." Then the young girl once more turned into a bee and flew out of the window.

And as she had said so it was. At dawn the following day, when he went down into the garden, the prince saw, a little distance away, a marble palace the like of which he had never before seen, with crystal windows and a golden roof. Kotschei, for his part, could not believe his eyes when he saw it. "Very well," said he, "this time you have succeeded. But to-morrow I shall send for my twelve daughters, and if you cannot tell me which is the youngest then off goes your head."

The prince went back to his room, but felt far more comfortable than he had the day before.

"What?" said he to himself, "he thinks I would not recognize the youngest of the twelve maidens? Is she not the same whose grace has already charmed me, and whose kindness has already aided me? Not know her? To point her out among the others will not be hard."

"You will find it so hard," said the bee, entering through the open window, "that without my help you would never be able to do so. We twelve sisters look so like each other that our own father cannot tell us apart save by certain details of dress."

"Then what shall I do?" asked the prince.

"Listen! You can tell the youngest, and that will be myself, by a lady-bug resting on her left eye-brow. So be sure you look for it." And this time, without stopping to change to her human form, the bee flew right out of the window again.

The following day Kotschei once more sent for the prince. His twelve daughters were already standing in line in the hall of the palace, all dressed exactly alike in every respect. Kotschei did not know that one of them was interested in the prince, but he was suspicious by nature. So he made them all take off the ribbons and jewels by means of which he usually told them apart, and before he had done so he had taken care to notice where the youngest stood.

The prince looked at them and was surprised to see how perfectly each resembled the other. Twice he walked past them without seeing the sign he had been told to look for. At last, the third time, he saw the lady-bug.

"This is your youngest daughter," he said.

Kotschei was furious. "How in the name of all the fiends did you guess it?" he cried. "There is some



magic about this! And since that is the case I will expose you to a test of another kind.

"Clear out, the rest of you!" he shouted at his daughters, "I do not want you around spying on me!" Then, when the young girls had gone, he said to Prince Unhoped-For:

"You shall return in three hours and show how clever you are in my presence. I will light a straw and before it has burned down, you will have to make a pair of boots for me. And if you cannot do so you die!"

Greatly cast down Prince Unhoped-For returned to his room, and there he found Kotschei's kind daughter waiting for him in her lovely human shape.

"Why do you look so serious, my fair prince?" said she.

"Why should I not look serious when your father wants me to make him a pair of boots in the twinkling of an eye? Am I a shoe-maker? Even if I were I could not make a pair of boots in a couple of seconds."

"What do you mean to do?" asked the young girl.

"Certainly not to make boots," answered the prince. "After all, if I must die then I must. No one can die more than once."

"No, my prince, you shall not die," said Kotschei's daughter. "I cannot help you do something which cannot be done; but I can try to save you. We will escape together or we will die together."

A good start was a very necessary thing, for King Kotschei had swift horses in his stables to overtake those whom he pursued. With a little earth which she moistened with saliva and kneaded with her fingers, the young girl in a few minutes made a small figure gifted with life for a few hours' time. Then she left the room with the prince, locked the door and threw the key far away. Taking the prince's hand in hers, they both rose from the abyss at the very spot where they had descended into the earth.

The sea, the reeds which grew along the shore, and the plain beyond again met their eyes. The prince's horse was running about in the tall grass. As soon as it spied its master it began to neigh and ran up to him. Unhoped-For leaped into the saddle, took the princess up before him and off they flew like an arrow.

When the prince did not appear at the hour he had set, Kotschei sent to ask why he kept him waiting. The servants who took the message found the door of his room locked and beat upon it with might and main, calling on him to open. Finally a voice answered from behind the door:

"In a moment!"

It was the little figure, imitating the prince's voice.

The servants took back this answer to Kotschei. He waited, but the prince did not come. Then he sent back the messengers, who called again, and again the voice answered:

"I am coming!"

When this new answer was brought him, Kotschei waited a little while longer; but still the prince did not appear.

"Does he dare make fun of me?" the furious monster then cried. "Hasten, break down the door and bring him to me!"

The servants rushed back, broke down the door, entered the room—and found only a little figure, which burst out laughing.

When Kotschei heard this he fell into a terrible rage and ordered his servants to hurry off in pursuit of the fugitive. Woe to them if they did not bring him back! They leaped on their horses and away they went.

Suddenly, as they rode madly along, the prince and the maiden thought they heard the gallop of horses' hoofs behind them. Unhoped-For jumped down from his horse and laid his ear to the ground.

"There can be no mistake," said he, "we are pursued!"

"If that is the case," answered the young girl, "there is no time to lose."

She at once turned herself into a river, changed the prince into a bridge, the horse into a crow, and split the highway they had been riding into three roads leading off in three different directions.

The horsemen who were pursuing them came to the



bridge and were struck dumb with astonishment. On the other side of the bridge were three roads, without trees and visible for a great distance, and on none of the three roads was there any trace of the fugitive prince. What ought they to do? They rode back, hanging their heads, to the kingdom beneath the earth.

Kostschei, who was waiting for them, trembling with impatience, had by this time discovered that his youngest daughter had also disappeared, and he did not for a moment doubt but that she had left with the prince.

When he saw his horsemen return and knew that their pursuit had been in vain, he uttered cries of rage. Then, when he had listened to them, he said:

"The bridge and the river were the prince and my daughter. Stupid creatures, hurry back at once!" And away they flew once more.

The fugitives, as you may imagine, had not been idle in the meantime. But they could not ride as fast as their pursuers.

"I hear hoof-beats," said the young girl.

Jumping down from his horse, the prince laid his ear to the ground again: "Yes, it is they, and they are drawing nearer!"

At once the fugitives and the horse disappeared, turning into three enormous oak-trees, around which other bushes and trees sprang up, completely surrounding them until there stood a gloomy forest, criss-crossed by innumerable paths and trails, along one of which

seemed to sound the gallop of a horse. When Kotschei's messengers arrived they plunged into the forest and continued their pursuit along the path on which they thought they heard the hoofbeats of the galloping horse. From time to time, by the magic Kotschei's daughter made, they caught a glimpse of an imaginary horse carrying the prince and maiden. Kotschei's horsemen galloped and galloped through the gloomy forest, while ever before their eyes lay the path and the fleeing couple. At last it seemed as though they had reached the fugitive when, suddenly, the horse and its riders were gone. What had become of them? The horsemen looked around on all sides, but in vain. Finally they returned to the place where they had entered the forest, and tired to death and discouraged, once more rode back to Kotschei.

When they had told him how they had vainly pursued the fugitives a second time, the lord of the kingdom beneath the earth grew wild with rage, lost all control of himself and cried:

"Give me a horse! I will pursue them myself and they shall not escape me!"

And off he flew on horseback, foaming with fury.

The forest, meanwhile, had disappeared; and the fugitives were galloping along as fast as their horse could travel, but Kotschei's horse was swifter.

"I think we are pursued," said the maiden.

"Yes," answered the prince.

"And this time it is Kotschei himself who pursues us," said his daughter. "The very first church we meet, however, marks the end of his empire, for he dare not pass beyond it. Give me your golden cross!"

The prince unfastened the golden cross, his mother's gift, and Kotschei's daughter turned the horse into a church and herself into a church-tower, which rose to the sky. On the top of the tower the golden cross gleamed in the sunlight. At the same time she turned Prince Unhoped-For into an old monk with a white beard.

Soon Kotschei galloped up.

"Have you seen a couple on horseback pass this way?" he asked the monk.

"Yes. Prince Unhoped-For passed this way an hour ago with your daughter, King Kotschei. They stopped at this church, ordered a mass said for your health and told me to remember them to you if you came this way. They must be far, far away by now."

When he heard this answer, spoken in calmest and most positive way, Kotschei did not suspect a trick. In his turn he rode back the way he had come, boiling with rage and cruelly mortified.

The fugitives could now ride on in peace without anything to worry them, for those who have once escaped Kotschei's terrible claws have nothing more to fear from him, even should he meet them again.

The Prince Unhoped-For and Kotschei's beautiful



daughter soon reached the palace of the prince's parents, where they were received with transports of joy. A few days later their wedding was celebrated with unheard of magnificence, and they lived happily ever afterward.

## THE EMPEROR'S DAUGHTER AND HER THREE SUITORS

**I**N the old, old days there was once an emperor who ruled a distant land and who had a very beautiful daughter. Many suitors came to her father's court to try to win her hand, and among them were three counts, who were great friends of the emperor. In fact, the emperor thought so much of all three, that he would not promise his daughter to any one of them, but said:

“If you wish to win my daughter's hand, wander out into the wide, wide world, and whichever one of you brings me back the choicest gift shall marry her.” So all three did as he said, and wandered off into the wide, wide world in different directions. And in the course of time the first count found a magic carpet which would fly through the air and carry people on it as it flew; and the second found a magic spy-glass, through which one could see the whole world and everything in it, even down to a fleck of dust at the bottom of the sea; and the third found a magic salve which would cure every sickness, and even bring the dead to life again.

They were far from each other when, one day, the suitor who had found the spy-glass looked through it,



“The suitor with the magic spy-glass saw  
the emperor’s daughter lying sick unto death”





and saw his companion just as he was loading the carpet on his shoulder. At once he went to him. And when they had joined company, he looked through his spy-glass once more, and this time saw his other companion, whom both of them hunted up. And when all three were together again, they said: "And now let us see what the emperor's daughter is doing!"

At once the suitor with the magic spy-glass looked through it, saw the emperor's daughter lying on a couch sick unto death, and told his two companions what he had seen. When they heard it, the suitor with the magic salve said: "I could cure her, if I could only reach her quickly enough!" To which the suitor with the magic carpet answered: "That is an easy matter! We will all three sit down on the carpet, and will reach the palace in a jiffy." And when they had all seated themselves on the carpet, sure enough, they found themselves in the emperor's palace before he knew it. As soon as the emperor saw them he said: "Alas, gentlemen, you undertook your long journey through the wide, wide world in vain! My daughter is lying on her death bed, so she can never marry any of you."

But the suitor with the magic salve answered: "Have no fear, Your Majesty, for your daughter shall not die!" He immediately rubbed a little of the salve on her lips, and no sooner had he done so than she sat up in bed, and began to talk, and in a short time she was as well as ever she had been. When the em-

peror saw this he felt very happy, and was so moved at the thought that she had been saved that he said he would give her to the suitor who had made her well again. But now the three counts began to quarrel in earnest, and as they quarreled the one who had rubbed the salve on the lips of the emperor's daughter said: "If it had not been for my magic salve we would now be mourning over her grave, and there would be nothing to quarrel about." But the count with the spy-glass answered: "If I had not seen her through my spy-glass, you would not have known she was sick, nor had a chance to use your salve, and she would not have been cured." When he heard this the third count, who owned the carpet, said: "If it had not been for my carpet we could not have reached her so quickly, and would not have found her alive when we came."

When the emperor had listened to all that they said to each other he said to them: "Gentlemen, again I am unable to give my daughter to any of you! You have all three brought back with you things which are equally precious and valuable. So I beg of you that you leave me with peace and good will in your hearts, and give up the idea of marrying my daughter."

And this they did. Obeying the emperor's command, they left him and went into a wilderness, where they lived as hermits. They settled down far away from each other, and none of them knew the others' whereabouts. Meanwhile the emperor married his



beautiful daughter to another count. After some years had passed, it chanced that the emperor's son-in-law went to the wars and took his wife along with him, and as they were sailing across the sea a terrible storm arose, and the ship was cast against a rock and broken to pieces. All those on board were drowned; only the emperor's daughter, who had caught hold of a board, managed to reach the shore, which was the shore of the very same wilderness in which the three counts who had been her suitors led the solitary lives of hermits. For three long years the emperor's beautiful daughter lived here on wild herbs and berries. But one day she lost her way in the wilderness, and could not find the cave in which she lived again. After a time she came to another cave, which was provided with a little door. So she thought she would open the door, slip in and spend the night there. But no sooner had she turned the door-knob than a rough, hoarse voice said: "Who's there?" At first she was frightened, but soon regained her presence of mind, and answered: "Unknown creature, please open the door!" Then the door opened and out stepped an old man, whose grey beard fell down to his girdle, and whose white hair spread out like a mantle over his bent back.

The emperor's daughter was really frightened when she saw the old man, for she had not believed there was a living soul in the wilderness. For a long time each looked at the other, and both were so surprised

that neither spoke a word, for neither had ever expected to see a human being again. The old man was the first to collect himself: "Tell me, little daughter, are you one of God's angels or a human being?" he said. And the emperor's daughter answered: "Old man, let me into your cave and I will tell you about myself." Then the old man took her by the hand, led her into the cave and offered her wild pears to eat; and when she had eaten them she began her story.

"I am the emperor's daughter, and three counts wished me to marry them. But my father could not choose among the three, for one was as good a match as the other. So he told them to wander out into the wide, wide world, and said that whichever one among them would bring him back the choicest and most valuable gift should have my hand in marriage. Off they went, and were gone for three years. Toward the end of that time I fell sick unto death. And while I lay dying, the three counts were on their way home, bringing with them their gifts, the one a magic spy-glass, the second a magic carpet and the third a magic salve." Here the old man interrupted her: "And what happened then?" he asked, "for that is what matters."

"Alas," answered the emperor's daughter, "they made me well again, but yet not one of the three won my hand, for my father the emperor married me to another count, who took me to the wars with him some

three years ago! Our ship sank at sea, and I was cast ashore in this uninhabited wilderness, and wandering about I have found you."

Then the old man struck his knee with his hand and cried: "I am one of the three counts who wanted to marry you, and here is the magic spy-glass through which I looked! I do not know whether my companions in this wilderness are still alive, but we can easily find out by looking through the glass." Then the old man looked through the spy-glass, and saw his two companions in the wilderness, went to them, and told them all that had happened. They kissed and embraced each other, and when they had done so gave their three magic gifts to the emperor's daughter, who at once seated herself on the carpet and flew back to her father, where she lived happily ever afterward. And that is the end of the story.



## ARGILUS AND HELEN

ONCE upon a time there was a king and queen who had three daughters and one son. One day the king and queen were talking together, and the queen said: "When our daughters marry we will have to give each of them a part of our kingdom, and that will make our kingdom very small. So we had better make nuns of them."

But her son heard these words, and thought to himself: "Not a bit of it! My sisters will be much happier married than shut up in a convent." So when the king and queen were far from home, overseeing the reapers on a distant *puszta*, one of those wide plains where the wheat grows high—for it happened to be harvest-time—some one came to the palace window, knocked and said to the prince: "Little king's son, I want to marry your older sister!" The prince did not lose any time. "Wait a few minutes," he cried, "and you shall have her."

So he called his oldest sister and as soon as she came into the room—slap, he threw her out of the window! Yet she did not fall to the ground, but on a golden bridge which was so long that it stretched from the earth to the sun; for the suitor who had come for her

was none other than the Sun King. He took the princess by the hand and led her along the golden bridge until they reached his kingdom in the middle of the sun.

When noontime came around, some one again stepped to the palace window, knocked and said: "Little king's son, I want to marry your second sister!" The little prince answered: "Wait a few minutes. You shall have her right away." Then he went into the second sister's room, took her across his arm, and also threw her out of the window. Yet she did not fall to the ground, but into a carriage of air. Four steeds which never stopped snorting and rearing were harnessed to the carriage. The unknown suitor seated himself beside her, and as soon as he cracked his whip the clouds spread themselves out and made a highway. The carriage rolled away like a storm, and in the twinkling of an eye had disappeared. This suitor was the Wind King.

The king's little son was greatly pleased to think that he already had married off two of his sisters. So when someone came that evening and knocked, he said: "You need not say a word. I know just what you want," and with all the good will in the world he threw his third sister out of the window. This sister fell into a silver-clear brook. The unknown suitor took her arm, and the waves gently carried them off to the moon; for this third suitor was the Moon King. The

king's little son, however, feeling he had done a good day's work, went happily to bed.

When the king and queen returned home the following morning and heard what the little prince had done, they were very much surprised. But since they had obtained such powerful sons-in-law as the Sun King, the Wind King and the Moon King, they were very well satisfied, and said to the little prince: "See how powerful your sisters have become owing to the husbands they have obtained! Now you must choose the daughter of some great king for your bride."

But the prince answered: "Thank you, but I have already chosen a bride for myself. The beautiful fairy Helen shall be my bride and none other." Then the king and queen were much frightened, and tried to get him to give up so dangerous an idea. When they did not succeed in doing so they at last cried: "Well, set out then, in heaven's name, son, and may heaven protect you in your rash endeavor!"

At the same time the old king took two bottles out of his chest, and handed them to his son with the following words: "My son, this one bottle contains the water of life; while the other is filled with the water of death. If you sprinkle a dead man with the water of life, life will return to him; and if you sprinkle a living man with the water of death, he will fall dead. Take these bottles. They are the greatest treasures I have and perhaps you may find them useful."



Now the entire court began to shed bitter tears, especially the court ladies, who were all very fond of the little prince. But he was brave and full of spirit, kissed the hands of his royal parents, hung the two bottles over his shoulder by a strap, the water of life to the right, the water of death to the left, girded on his sabre and set out.

After he had wandered a long, long distance, he came to a valley full of dead men, for a battle had just taken place there. The prince took the bottle with the water of life and sprinkled some drops on the face of one of the dead men; and the latter at once rose, rubbed his eyes and cried: "Well, well, how could I have slept so long!" His deliverer said to him: "Tell me what has happened here?" And the soldier answered: "Yesterday we fought with the fairy Helen, and she gave us a terrible beating."

The prince shrugged his shoulders and went on. In the next valley a whole army lay scattered over the ground, and the little prince again awoke a dead man and asked: "Did the fairy Helen beat you too?"

"Yes," replied the man restored to life.

"Why are you fighting against her?" inquired the prince.

"Do you not know," answered the soldier, "that our king wishes to marry her, but that she will take no one for a husband who has not overcome her? We marched against her with three armies. Yesterday she

defeated the first, to-day she beat us at sun-rise, and now she is fighting the third."

And not long after, the prince as he went on, found the soldiers of the third army also lying as dead as door-nails. As he had done before, he recalled one of the fallen to life, and the latter said: "The battle is just over and the fairy Helen has killed us all."

"Where will I find her?" asked the prince.

"Her castle is on the other side of yonder hill," replied the soldier.

Argilus—for that was the prince's name—went over the hill and came to Helen's castle. He walked in without being stopped, for there was no one in the place. But in Helen's bed-room a sabre hung on the wall which kept leaping out of its sheath and back again with never a stop.

"Oh," said Argilus, "if you are as restless as that, I will make use of you! I like you better than I do my own sabre, which only moves when I swing it!" With that he drew his own sabre from its sheath and thrust Helen's into it instead. No sooner had he done so than the fairy Helen stood before him. "What, you dare to force your way into my castle?" cried she. "Now you will have to fight with me!" And with that she tore the sabre from the wall, the little prince drew the one he had just exchanged, and they began to fight. But the very first time the two blades crossed the fairy Helen's sabre broke in two. Then she

laughed and said: "You shall be my husband!" and fell on his neck and kissed and caressed him so that it was a pleasure to see.

Then they were married; and after they had lived for a time in perfect peace and happiness, the fairy Helen said to her husband one morning: "Dear husband, I must leave you for a little while. I am parting from you for the first and last time, and will return in seven times seven days. After that our life shall move along in endless joy. Everything in the castle is at your disposal, only do not enter the last room, for if you do it might give rise to the greatest misfortunes."

With these words she disappeared. After she had gone, the prince found that time hung heavy on his hands without her. He went over the whole castle from top to bottom, finally came to the last room and then—for he was young and thoughtless—he unlocked it. There he saw an old man with a beard of flame. This was the Flame King, but the prince did not know it. There were three bands around the middle of his body, each band was made of steel, and they held him to the wall. Said the Flame King: "Greetings, young prince! See, this beard of mine is flame and it makes me very warm. Give me a drink of wine!" Now, since Argilus was very good-natured, he did as the old man asked him. Yet even while the Flame King was drinking, one of the steel bands which held him burst. He chuckled and said: "It tasted very good. Please



give me another flagon." This Argilus did, and when he had drunk the second flagon, the second steel band burst. Then the Flame King laughed and said: "Twice you have given me wine, now give me a flagon of water!" As soon as the foolish prince had done so, the third band burst and the Flame King disappeared.

The fairy Helen had not yet completed half her journey before the Flame King appeared beside her: "You rejected me as a husband, killed three of my armies, and took me prisoner. Now you are in my power. You shall not be my bride, but the very least of my servants."

Since Helen had married Argilus her magic strength had left her, so all her resistance was in vain, and with three mighty leaps the evil Flame King carried her off into his kingdom.

The seven times seven days had passed and gone, but still Helen did not return. Then Argilus grew frightened, and made up his mind to travel to his three brothers-in-law and see if they did not know where he could find Helen. The first he met was the Sun King, who was just getting home. "Greetings, little brother-in-law," said he, "and what brings you here?" "Dear brother-in-law," said Argilus, "I am looking for my wife, who has disappeared. Do you not know where she is?" "No," replied the Sun King, "I have not seen her. But perhaps she only can be seen by night. In that case you had better ask our brother-in-law the

Moon King." So they ate supper together and Argilus wandered on to the Moon King.

He reached the Moon King's silver palace just as the latter was about to set out on his nightly journey. Argilus told him his trouble, but the Moon King replied: "I have not seen her, either, but come and take the road with me to-night, and perhaps we will catch sight of her." So they travelled together the whole night long, but saw no trace of Helen. Then the Moon King said: "Now I must go home. But there comes our brother-in-law, the Wind King. Talk to him; he manages to get everywhere. Perhaps he has seen her."

In a moment the Wind King was standing beside them, and when he heard his brother-in-law's story he said: "I know very well where she is. The Flame King holds her captive in an underground cavern, where she has to wash his pots and pans in the Burning Brook. As she gets very warm doing this, I have often cooled her off with my breezes."

"Thank you, dear brother-in-law, for cooling her off," said Argilus, "but will you please take me to her?" "Gladly," replied the Wind King. He breathed on Argilus and in a moment's time Argilus and his horse were standing before Helen, who was so pleased to see him that she dropped the pots and pans into the Burning Brook. Argilus said very little, but quickly lifted her on his horse and rode off.

The Flame King had just gone to his room when he

heard a tremendous racket in the stable. Down he went, and there was his horse Taigarot rearing and prancing, neighing, biting his crib, and stamping on the ground. Now, Taigarot was a magic horse. It understood what people said, could answer them, and had nine feet. "Why are you carrying on in this way?" asked the Flame King. "Have you not feed enough? Did you not get your water?" "Feed I have in plenty, and water as well," replied Taigarot, "but Helen has been carried off!" The Flame King's beard trembled with rage; but Taigarot continued: "Be calm! Eat, drink and sleep, if you feel like it, for I can catch her again in three leaps." So the Flame King did as the horse advised, and when he had strengthened himself and rested, he mounted Taigarot and in three leaps had caught up with Argilus, and torn Helen from his arms. As he galloped back he cried: "I will not kill you this time, but if you come to my palace again you shall die!"

The little prince rode back sadly to his three brothers-in-law and told them what had happened, so the three brothers-in-law consulted and then said: "You must find a horse that runs even more swiftly than Taigarot. Now, there is only one such horse, and that is Taigarot's brother. It is true that he has only four feet, but it is certain that he is swifter than Taigorot himself."



"Where will I find this horse?" asked Argilus. And his brothers-in-law said: "Witch Ironnose keeps the horse hidden beneath the earth. Go to her, enter her service, and ask for the horse as your wages."

"Pray take me there, dear brothers-in-law?" begged Argilus. "At once," said the Sun King; "but first receive this magic wand from your brothers-in-law, who love you well." With these words he gave him a wand which was made half of silver and half of gold, and trembled continually, for it was formed of sunlight, moonshine and wind. "Whenever you need our aid," the Sun King went on, "thrust this wand into the earth and we will come to you!"

With that the Sun King took his little brother-in-law on a sunray and carried him for a whole day; then the Moon King carried him for a whole night on a moonbeam; and finally the Wind King carried him for a day and a night, and by that time he had reached the palace of Witch Ironnose.

The palace of Witch Ironnose was built of white, gleaming skulls, and there was but a single skull missing to make the building complete. When the old witch heard a knocking at the door she looked out, and her heart rejoiced.

"Here comes another at last," she cried. "For three hundred years I have been waiting vainly for that one skull needed to complete my splendid palace. Come

right in, my dear boy!" Argilus stepped in and was horrified when he saw the old witch close by, for she was large and ugly and her nose was of iron.

"I should like to enter your service," bravely said the little prince.

"Well and good," replied the witch, "and what do you want for pay?"

"The horse that you keep hidden under the earth."

"You shall have it, my son, if you serve me faithfully. But if you fail me but a single time, then you die."

"Very well," said the prince, "be it so."

Then the witch explained: "Those who work for me, work only three days, and you may start work at once. Drive my horses out on the Silk Meadow; if one of them is missing this evening, then you forfeit your life."

With that she led the prince to the horses. The horses were all of brass; they neighed frightfully and gave the most curious leaps and bounds.

"Well, get to work," said Witch Ironnose and locked herself in her room.

Argilus let down the bars of the horse-pen, flung himself upon one of the brass horses, and stormed away with the whole lively band.

No sooner had they reached the nearby Silk Meadow than the horse he was riding flung him head over heels on a bit of deep, marshy ground, into which he sank

up to his breast. Then the whole herd of horses scattered. But Argilus took the wand his brothers-in-law had given him and thrust it into the ground. At once the sunrays fell down with so glowing a heat that the whole marshland began to dry out, and the brass horses commenced to melt. Filled with terror, they all ran back to the horse-pen, and Witch Ironnose was very much surprised to see the horses all together once more.

"To-morrow you shall tend my twelve black mares," said she. "But if you do not bring them back before the last sunray sinks in the West, you are a dead man."

Now, the twelve black mares were the daughters of Witch Ironnose, and when Argilus rode out with them, one of the mares said: "I pity you, for you will find us harder to manage than the brass horses!" And, true enough, in a moment the twelve mares had scattered. But Argilus thrust his magic wand into the ground, and a terrible storm arose. The wind blew directly against every single one of them, and no matter how the black mares reared and pranced, the wind was the stronger, and all had to run back home. Argilus locked the stable door just as the last ray of the sun was sinking in the West, and there before him stood Witch Ironnose. She was very much surprised to see that the black mares and Argilus had come home again, and said: "If you do your work properly to-night, then you will be free to-morrow. Go and milk the brass horses and prepare a bath with the milk. And



the bath must be ready by the time the first sunray appears in the sky!"

After Argilus had left the stable, Witch Ironnose took a pitchfork and beat her daughters all night long.

Meanwhile the prince went to the brass horses, thinking that this last was the hardest task of all. He was just about to thrust his magic wand into the ground when his brother-in-law, the Moon King, appeared: "I have been looking for you," said the Moon King, "for I know just what you need. Dig three fathoms deep in the place where I shine in the stable of the brass horses. There you will find a golden bridle. Once you hold that in your hand every horse will obey you." Argilus did as the Moon King had told him, and all the brass horses stood stock still and allowed him to milk them.

In the morning the bath was ready, and the milk steamed and smoked, for it was boiling. Witch Ironnose deceitfully said to Argilus: "Get into the bath!" Said the prince: "Very well, but if I stand this test then I shall ride straight off. So have the horse brought out which you promised me as the reward of my labors." At once the horse stood beside the tub. It was a small horse, insignificant-looking and dirty. But when Argilus went to step into the tub, it dipped its head in the milk and drew all the fire into its nostrils, so that the prince came to no harm in the bath. And when he stepped out he was seven times hand-

somer than before. When Witch Ironnose saw this, she thought: "Now I will make myself seven times handsomer too, and I will marry this good-looking prince." At once she jumped into the tub. But the horse again stuck its head into the tub, and blew the fire which it had drawn out through its nostrils back into the milk again, so that Witch Ironnose was consumed by the flames.

Prince Argilus now mounted his horse with a glad heart and rode off, and as soon as they had left the land of Witch Ironnose, the horse said:

"Wash me in this brook!" This Argilus did and the horse at once turned golden-colored, and a little golden curl hung down from every hair he had. Then the magic horse, whose name was Tatos, leaped the ocean with a single bound, and carried his master to the Flame King's cavern, where poor Helen was once more standing by the Burning Brook washing the pots and pans. "Come," cried the prince, "I am going to rescue you!" "Alas," said Helen, "the Flame King will kill you if he catches you!" But Argilus had already lifted her to the saddle and was galloping off.

At once the horse Taigarot began to make a terrible racket in his stall. "What is the trouble?" cried the Flame King. "Helen has run away," said Taigarot. "Then I shall eat, drink and sleep," said the Flame King, "for you can catch up with her in three leaps, as you already have done." But Taigarot shook his

mane. "Not so," said he; "mount at once on my back, for even then we may not catch up with her. Argilus is riding my younger brother, the fastest horse in the world."

So the Flame King buckled on his flame spurs, mounted Taigarot and rushed off. When they drew near the prince's horse Tatos, the latter cried: "Brother, why do you let the Flame King drive his flame spurs into your ribs! He will only burn out your insides, and even then you will not be able to catch up with me! It would be better if both of us peacefully served the same master."

Taigarot saw that this was good sense, so the next time the Flame King thrust the flame spurs into his ribs he reared and flung him off. And since they were high in the air, just below the stars, the evil Flame King fell so heavily that he broke his neck. Argilus, however, brought Helen safely back to her palace, where they held their wedding all over again, and unless they have died are still living in all joy and happiness.



## FOUR LITTLE TALES OF BURIED TREASURE

### I

#### *The Magic Flower*

**I**N the Harz Mountains there is a peak known as the Kyffhäuser, on which the ruins of an ancient castle may be seen to this very day. Once upon a time, hundreds of years ago, a poor young shepherd boy who lived in the little village of Sittendorf, which lies amid golden meadows on the southern slope of the Harz, was wandering through the hills, and came to the foot of the Kyffhäuser. Driving his sheep before him, he began to climb, and climbed higher and higher until he reached the top of the mountain. There he saw a beautiful blue flower, fairer than any he had ever seen before, so he picked it and stuck it in his cap, meaning to give it to the girl he loved down in the village when he returned.

And as he was walking past the ruins of the castle, he caught sight of an old vault. It was open and its great oaken door swung back on its hinges. Curious, he stepped into the vault, saw that the ground was covered with thousands of glittering little stones, and picking up a number of them he stuffed them into his pockets. When he turned to go out into the open again

a deep voice cried: "Do not forget the best of all!" Then he was unable to remember what happened or how he got out of the vault. But no sooner did he see the sun and his grazing sheep again than the great oak door slammed to behind him. And when he took up his hat to look at the flower, he saw that he must have lost it while stumbling out of the vault.

Suddenly a dwarf stood before him: "Where is the magic flower that you found?" he said. "I must have lost it," answered the shepherd, sadly. "Then you have lost your luck," cried the dwarf. "The flower was meant for you and was worth more than all the sheep in Sittendorf!" With that he disappeared, but the shepherd did not feel so badly, after all, though he had lost his magic flower, for when he put his hands into his pockets, he found that each glimmering little stone had turned into a bright gold piece.

The magic flower was never found again, but to this day the shepherds and mountaineers of the Harz look for it among the ruins of the Kyffhäuser, for it is clear that whoever finds it will have the key to the buried treasure of the ruined castle.

## II

### *The Soul That Went Treasure Hunting*

Once upon a time, in Iceland, a party of travellers put up their tent in an open field and laid down to rest.

But the man who lay at the entrance to the tent could not sleep, and as he lay there awake, he saw a blue mist rise from the mouth of the man who lay next to him within the tent, move slowly toward the opening and float out. This roused his curiosity, so he stood up and followed. Before him the blue mist slowly moved across the field until it came to the skull of a horse, lying by the roadside, about which a number of flies were buzzing. The mist crept into the skull and remained there for quite a time; but finally crept out again. Then it kept on as before until it came to a little brook which crossed the entire field; and here it moved up and down, as though it would have liked to have crossed, but was unable to do so. When the man saw this he took the horse-whip he carried with him and laid it across the little brook, and at once the blue mist crept along the whip-handle and crossed the water. Then it kept on until it reached a little hillock, where it crept into a small hole. The man waited until the blue mist came out again, which was not very long, and then it returned the way it had come, again crossed the brook on the whip-handle, entered the tent and disappeared in the sleeping man's mouth just as it had come forth.

When the travellers prepared to continue their journey the following morning and were saddling and packing the horses, the man who had slept next to the one in the tent-door said: "I wish I had what I



dreamt about last night!" So the man who had seen the blue mist rise from his mouth asked him what he had dreamt about and the other said:

"It seemed to me that I left the tent and went out into a large plain. Soon I came to a fine, large house, in which a number of people were gathered, who were passing the time merrily, singing and playing. I stayed in the house for quite a time, and then came out and again went across the plain. Soon I came to a great river. For a long time I looked for some way by which I might cross, but could find none. At last I saw a great giant come along. He carried an enormous tree-trunk in his hands and laid it over the river, and on this tree-trunk I crossed, and again walked a long distance. Finally I came to a large burial mound. It was open and I went in, but all I found there was a great barrel full of gold pieces. I stayed there for a long time looking at the treasure; for I had never seen such a heap of gold before. Then I came out again and went back the same way I had come; the giant once more appeared and laid the tree-trunk over the river; I crossed and so got back to my tent."

When he had heard this, the man who had watched the blue mist grew joyful and said to the other: "Come along with me, friend, and we will get the gold pieces!" At first the other man laughed and thought his companion was not quite right in the head. But at last he agreed to go with him and there, when

they dug in the little hillock, they found a small barrel of gold pieces, which they divided between themselves. So if ever you see a soul wandering about in the shape of a little blue mist, while the body dreams, do not fail to follow it, for who knows but what it may lead you to a buried treasure.

### III

#### *The Old Man of the Winecellar Hole*

Once upon a time, not far from a certain city, there was a deep hole in the stony ground of a little green valley, known as the "Winecellar Hole," and supposed to contain buried treasure. And in this valley a poor shepherd, a good, quiet man, was accustomed to pasture his sheep. One night when the sun was going down, an old man stepped up to the shepherd and said to him: "Come with me and I will show you treasures from which you may take as much as you wish!" So the shepherd left his dog to care for the flock and followed the old man. They had gone but a short distance when the ground suddenly opened before their feet, and both went far, far down into the earth until they came to a great chamber in which was heaped up an enormous treasure of gold and precious stones.

"Take what you will!" said his guide. So the shepherd chose a great lump of gold and a voice said: "Take it to the goldsmith in town and he will give you

a good price for it!" Then his guide once more led him to the surface of the earth, and the shepherd did as he had been told and received a large sum of money for his lump of gold. Much pleased, he brought it to his father and the latter said: "Why not try your luck in the underground chamber once more?" "Yes, indeed, father, and so I will," answered the shepherd. "I left my gloves lying there, and if you care to come with me we will go down again to-night."

So that very night both of them set out, found the opening in the earth and reached the subterranean treasure chamber. There the gold and precious stones lay about as before, in great heaps, together with the shepherd's gloves; and both men filled their pockets with all the gold and jewels they would hold and went out again, the door of the chamber closing after them with a loud crash.

The next night they again tried their fortune, but this time they could not find a trace of the opening in the ground. While they were looking for it the old man of the Winecellar Hole came up to them and said: "If you had left your gloves in the treasure-chamber last night, instead of taking them away with you, you would have found the entrance the third time. The entrance was to open for you three times; but now you will never be able to find it again!" And so it was. Yet the shepherd and his father had carried off enough treasure during their two visits to be able to live in



comfort and happiness the rest of their lives, and often thought with gratitude of the mysterious old man who had first led them to the Winecellar Hole.

## IV

*The Fearless Flute-Player*

Once upon a time there was a merry musician, who played the flute in a masterly way. He wandered about in the world as chance would have it, playing his flute in town and village and thus managed to make a living. Now, it happened that one evening he came to a large farm and decided to stay there overnight, because he could not reach the next village before it grew dark. The farmer received him kindly, gave him a good supper, and after he had eaten begged him to play a few pieces for him. When the musician had finished playing he looked out of the window and there, by the light of the moon, he saw an old castle not far away, which seemed to be in a more or less ruinous condition.

“What old castle is that,” he asked the farmer, “and to whom did it belong?” And the farmer told him that many, many years before a count had lived in the castle who was very rich, and at the same time very miserly. He had oppressed his subjects, never given any alms to the poor and finally—because he was too miserly even to marry—had died without an heir.

Then his nearest of kin had come to take possession of his estate, but had been unable to find any of his riches. It was generally believed that he had buried his treasure, and that it was still lying somewhere in the old castle; but though many a man had gone there to hunt for it, none had ever returned. So the authorities had warned every one throughout the land, and had forbidden all treasure-hunting in the ruins.

The musician had listened attentively to what the farmer said, and no sooner had he ended than he told him he had a great desire to go to the castle himself, for he was daring and knew no fear. The farmer begged him earnestly to give up the idea, he even fell on his knees and asked him to show some regard for his young life and not to go to the castle. But prayers and pleadings were in vain, the musician had made up his mind.

Two of the farm hands had to light lanterns and accompany the fearless flute-player to the old castle. When he got there he sent them back with one of the lanterns, took the second in his hand, and bravely climbed up a high flight of stairs. When he had reached the top he came to a great hall, with doors on all sides. He opened the first door, went into a room and, seating himself at an old-fashioned table, on which he put his lantern, began to play his flute. The farmer had been unable to sleep because of worry and anxiety, and had often looked out of the window. But when he

heard the tones of the flute he was filled with joy to think his guest was still making music. When the clock on the wall struck eleven, however, and the flute-playing stopped, he was terribly frightened, thinking that whatever evil spirit dwelt in the old castle must have wrung the good-looking musician's neck. Yet this was not the case. The latter had fearlessly enjoyed his own music, but finally he grew very hungry, for he had not eaten much in the farm-house, so he walked about the room and looked around. And there, on another table, he spied a pot of raw lentils, a cellar of salt, a jar of water, and a bottle of cider. He quickly poured the water on the lentils, stirred in some salt, made a fire in the fireplace—for the wood lay ready to hand—and cooked himself a good lentil-soup. While the lentils were boiling he drank the bottle of cider, and then played on his flute again. Then, when the lentils were cooked, he took the pot from the fire, poured the soup into a plate which stood on the table, and ate with a good appetite. After that he looked at his watch and saw that it was twelve o'clock.

At this moment the door opened, and two tall black men stepped in carrying a bier on which lay a coffin. Without saying a word to the musician, who had returned to his soup and paid no attention to them, they set down the coffin in a corner, and went out of the room again. As soon as they had gone the musician



got up quickly and raised the lid of the coffin. There lay a little old man with grey hair and a grey beard. But the youth was not afraid. He took the body out, propped it up near the stove, and no sooner had it grown warm than life began to stir in it. Then the youth fed the old man some lentils and tended him as a mother might her child until he grew quite lively, rose and said: "Follow me!" The little old man went ahead and the musician took his lantern and followed him without hanging back. The little man led him down a narrow, ruined flight of stairs into a deep, horrible vault.

There in the vault lay a great heap of money. Then the little old man said to the youth: "Divide this heap into two equal parts for me, but if there is not exactly as much on the one pile as on the other, I shall kill you." The youth only smiled and began to count out the money on two large tables, one coin on one, the next on the other. Before long he had divided all the money into two equal parts so that there was only a single shilling left. But this did not faze the musician. Without wasting thought, he took out his pocket-knife, set the blade upon the shilling, and, taking up a hammer which lay on the table, he cut it into two halves with a single blow. And when he threw one half on one pile, and the other on the other, the little old man became quite joyful and cried: "You heavenly fellow, you have set me free! For

more than a hundred years I have been condemned to guard this treasure, which my avarice led me to gather, until I found some one who could manage to divide the money into two equal parts. As yet no one had been able to do so, and I had to strangle them all. Now, the one pile of money is yours, and the other must be distributed among the poor. You kind, good fellow, you have set me free!" With that he disappeared, and the youth climbed the stairs and played merry tunes on his flute in the room in which he had eaten his supper.

The farmer was glad to hear him playing once more, and early the following morning he went to the castle—for it was perfectly safe to enter by daytime—and gave the youth a joyful greeting. The latter told him his story and then took him down and showed him his treasure. He did as the little old man had told him, and divided half of it among the poor. Then he had the ruined castle torn down, and soon a new castle rose on the same spot in which the musician, now a rich man, lived happily to the end of his days.

## THE PICTURE OVER THE WELL

ONCE upon a time a ruler named Aladdin, who reigned over the kingdom of Kashmir, had a beautiful daughter. No doubt, this princess would have been called the greatest beauty in all the East, had not the daughter of Aladdin's vizier been even more beautiful. Throughout the kingdom every one talked about the heavenly charm of the two maidens; but when it came to deciding between them, every one said the vizier's daughter was the handsomer of the two, because she was kind and gentle, while the king's daughter was proud and haughty.

When the king's daughter learned that the lovely Ghulnas—for that was the name of the vizier's daughter—was preferred to her, she was so vexed and mortified that she grew very ill. So her father called in the most famous physicians, and they said her illness was caused by a secret sorrow which preyed upon her heart. When the king heard this, he begged his daughter to tell him what troubled her, and swore that he would grant any wish she might make, whatever it be, even to the half of his kingdom.

Then, though in her heart she was ashamed of her jealousy and envy of Ghulnas, the princess told her



father that the beauty of the vizier's daughter was the cause of her sorrow, and that she would never grow well until Ghulnas was removed from the kingdom of Kashmir. And her father the king promised her that he would see that Ghulnas did not remain in Kashmir to trouble her.

Then he sent for his vizier and said: "Vizier, I grieve to have to tell you so, but you must sell your daughter for a slave. I know it will be hard for you, but the life of my own daughter is at stake. I need say no more, except that I expect you to make this sacrifice for me as a good and faithful servant."

For some time the unhappy vizier hesitated between his love for his daughter and his duty to the king. At last he decided to obey his master and turn a deaf ear to the voice of nature. Yet he was too proud to offer his daughter for sale as a slave in the public market, and in order to spare her this shame, he thought of a way out. He made the lovely Ghulnas lie down in a cedar chest, and then sent for an auctioneer and said to him: "Offer this chest for sale in the market-place for the sum of forty-thousand *aspers* of silver. But you are to sell it only on condition that the man who buys it takes it without seeing what it contains."

The auctioneer took the chest to the market-place, but in vain he tried to sell it. No one wanted to pay so great a sum for the cedar chest without knowing what was in it. Yet at last a young watercarrier,

bolder than the rest, who suspected there might be some mystery about the chest, offered to buy it. He borrowed the forty-thousand *aspers* from a merchant who was a friend of his, and after he had handed them over to the auctioneer, carried the chest to his home. He was overcome with surprise and joy when, opening the chest, he saw that it contained a maiden whose beauty dazzled the eyes.

“Charming *houri*,” he cried—for in truth Ghulnas looked like one of the maidens of Allah’s paradise—“what strange adventures have brought you to this cedar chest?” But the daughter of the vizier, who did not wish to tell her name, answered: “I am no *houri*, but merely a poor, unfortunate girl whom fate has made your slave. Yet I will not complain, and will serve you faithfully and humbly now that you are my master.” But so charming was Ghulnas that her master the watercarrier could not think of her as a slave at all. He resolved to go before the judge and set her free, and then make her his wife. At the same time, before carrying out his plan, he thought he would put her to the test, and find out whether she could be trusted as a wife should be. So he led her to his mother, who lived in a small town, a few days’ journey from Kashmir, took the latter aside and said to her: “Dear mother, I intend to marry this young slave girl whom I am leaving in your care. Watch her carefully, and when I come back tell me whether

she is modest, truthful and loyal as a good wife should be." Then he took leave of his mother and Ghulnas, telling them he would return in a few days.

The beautiful slave soon won the heart of the water-carrier's mother. So gentle and obliging was she that the older woman began to love her as though she were her own child. The watercarrier's mother had always been very poor, yet had never complained of her poverty. It made her feel badly, however, to think that Ghulnas had to share her wretchedness, and she often wished she were wealthy in order to make things pleasanter for the girl. And gentle Ghulnas, on the other hand, was moved by the misery of the woman who had shown her such kindness. So she gave her a large diamond, which she had hidden about her person when her unnatural father had shut her up in the chest, and told the old woman to sell it for ten thousand *zecchins* of gold. Since the diamond was very beautiful and of the clearest water, a buyer soon was found, and the old woman joyfully returned with the gold to Ghulnas, whom she now called her beloved daughter.

Ghulnas then rented a large, convenient house for the watercarrier's mother and herself, and filled it with comfortable furniture, for she had decided to think no more of her unhappiness, but to adapt herself to her new surroundings and her present mode of life. Yet, alas, events were about to take place which were to make her a thousand times more unhappy than before!



The fame of her great beauty had quickly spread through the town in which she lived, and one young man fell so deeply in love with her that he was bold enough to tell her about it. When Ghulnas, whose heart was faithful to the watercarrier who had treated her with such delicacy and kindness, reproved her admirer, the latter, filled with rage, made up his mind to do her an ill turn. He travelled to Kashmir and there, meeting the watercarrier, said to him: "I cannot help pitying you, when I think of the ingratitude with which your slave girl returns your kindness. While you are killing yourself with work here, she is living in luxury. No doubt, she has found a hidden treasure in your house, and is flinging it away right and left in your absence. Besides this, she goes about the streets unveiled and ill-treats your poor old mother!" The watercarrier, filled with rage, especially at the thought that Ghulnas ill-treated his mother, did not stop to find out whether these accusations were true or false, but hurried off to punish his slave.

When he reached the town, the handsome house in which his mother was living and the neat furniture all confirmed what had been said of the hidden treasure, and made him feel sure he had been deceived. When he entered, Ghulnas, whose conscience was free from guilt, came forward to meet him. Blind with rage, however, he did not give her a chance to say a

word, but thrust a dagger—which he had kept hidden beneath his coat—into her breast. And when he saw that his first blow had not stretched her to the ground, he drew back to stab her once more. Terrified, poor Ghulnas dodged him and, with the strength of despair, leaped straight out of the window.

A Jewish merchant who happened to be passing the house saw the young girl lying in the street bathed in blood. He raised her up and carried her to his home. In the meantime, the watercarrier's mother, who had been in an adjoining room, came hurrying in, having heard Ghulnas' screams. There she saw her son, his eyes sparkling with rage, a dagger covered with blood in his hand, and said to him: "For whom is the dagger, my son, and where is Ghulnas?"

"I have just this moment used the dagger on that faithless and disloyal slave, who has plundered me and ill-treated you!"

"Are you out of your senses?" cried his mother, with tears in her eyes. "Ah, you will soon weep for the evil you have done! You have slain the kindest and most innocent of all maidens by mistake!" And then she told him how generously Ghulnas had relieved her own wretchedness by the sale of her diamond, and with what love and affection she had always treated her.

Now, when it was too late, the watercarrier gave way to the greatest grief. He wept and ran down into the street, where he hoped to see his beloved Ghulnas,

but she had vanished. Then he hurried from one end of town to the other, but could not find a trace of her.

In the meantime, the Jewish merchant had sent for a physician, and when the latter had examined Ghulnas' wound, he declared that it was not mortal and that she would live. It turned out that the physician was right, for in the course of time Ghulnas recovered her health and all her former loveliness. Now, when he saw how beautiful she was, the Jewish merchant lost his heart to her, and earnestly begged her to marry him. But this Ghulnas could not do, for in spite of all she still loved her watercarrier. At last, when her admirer grew more and more urgent, and even wanted to set a day for the wedding, she determined to leave his home. There was only one way whereby she could escape from the house, for she was carefully guarded. This was through a window which opened on the sea, and when he had left her, she opened the window and flung herself into the sea, for even there, if it were so written in the book of life, she knew she might be saved by Allah's aid. And, sure enough, three brothers, fishermen, who had cast their nets near the place where she had leaped into the water, saw her struggling in the waves. Since they were expert swimmers they seized her garments, drew her into their boat, and rowed off to a meadow on the other side of the town, where they brought her ashore.

But the vizier's daughter, once the efforts of her res-



cuers had brought her back to life again, found she had leaped from the frying-pan into the fire, for she was in greater danger than ever. Her unusual beauty went straight to the hearts of the three brothers. Instead of one man wishing to make her his wife, there were now three, for each of the brothers wanted to marry her, and they quarreled violently among themselves as to which one of them she should wed. They were about to come to blows when a young knight chanced to ride by, whom they at once asked to decide their quarrel. "The only way to decide your difficulty is by lot," said the young knight. "I will shoot three arrows in three opposite directions. Whichever one of you first finds his arrow and brings it back to me shall marry the girl."

This proposal pleased the fishermen so well that they accepted it without a single objection. The knight at once drew his bow, and shot three arrows into the air, in different directions. Each of the three brothers at once ran off as fast as he could in the direction taken by one of the arrows, in the hope of first finding it and bringing it back. When the young knight saw that they were a good distance away and still running, he swung Ghulnas up behind him on his horse, and, galloping off in the fourth direction, soon lost sight of the fishermen and reached a village belonging to him.

Poor Ghulnas! She was so beautiful that every one who saw her at once wished to marry her. No sooner

had the young knight dismounted and lifted her from the horse than he begged her to become his wife. Ghulnas at once saw that she could only avoid this new offer by some clever trick. So she listened to him without showing any anger, and even acted as though she were willing to accept his hand.

"But," said she, "you tell me your castle is only a mile away. These garments I wear are torn and soiled, and I should not like to ride to your home in them as your promised bride. I would feel ashamed. Order one of your villagers to bring you man's clothing. I can slip it on over these robes stained by travel and salt sea water, and enter your castle as a man without attracting attention. Then you can provide me with silken dresses in which I need not be ashamed to show myself."

At once the knight had the best man's robe that the village afforded brought, and when Ghulnas had slipped it on over her garments she said: "And now, to show you I can act the part of a man properly, and know how to ride, let me mount your horse and prove it!"

The knight at once led the horse forward, and Ghulnas, leaping lightly into the saddle, made it dance and prance. Then, while the knight was admiring her skill, she suddenly dug spurs into the horse's flanks, rode off at full gallop, and vanished from his sight like a flash of lightning. Fearing that he might follow her,

Ghulnas rode all that day and all the following night without stopping, and without any idea of where she was going.

The following morning the first sunrays which lit the horizon showed her the walls and towers of a great city. Uncertainly, she turned her horse's head toward it. And then, with the greatest astonishment, she saw that the inhabitants of the city were coming out to meet her. When they drew near they made the following speech:

"The king of our city died last night. Since he left no heir to the throne, his dying command was that we should take for our king the first man we met with when we opened the city gates this morning. You are that man!"

Ghulnas with an amiable and kindly smile then received the homage of her new subjects, who never for a moment suspected she was a girl and not a man. She rode through the crowded streets while the people cheered, and took possession of the palace in which the king had lived. As soon as she had mounted the throne, she devoted herself entirely to matters of state. She chose honest and intelligent viziers, and, above all, saw to it that every one of her subjects received justice and that none were oppressed. Her people admired the wisdom with which she ruled, and blessed the fate which had brought them a king whose first thought was to make them happy.



After the beautiful Ghulnas had ruled the city with wisdom and justice for some years, she had a magnificent well built just without the city gates. And when the building had been completed, she had her picture painted in the likeness of a queen, not a king. This she did without telling the painter why or wherefore. When it had been completed, this picture was fastened high above the entrance to the well. Near-by Ghulnas posted soldiers, who were ordered to bring to the palace all those who, on seeing the picture, sighed or showed any signs of grief.

In the meantime, the poor watercarrier, who had been unable to get over the loss of his beloved slave, wandered from city to city, in hopes of finding a trace of her. At last he came to the well which Ghulnas had built, and no sooner had he caught sight of the face of the girl who was so dear to him, and of whom he thought day and night, than he uttered a deep groan. At once the soldiers seized him and led him before Ghulnas, whom he did not recognize because of her disguise. In an angry tone of voice she ordered him to tell her why he had shed tears at sight of her picture over the well. And the watercarrier, trembling violently, told her the tale of his misfortunes. When he had finished, Ghulnas had him led off to prison.

A few days later chance led the three fishermen to the same well: in the picture which hung above it they recognized the girl they had saved from the waves.

The sight recalled all their grief at their loss, and they could not help sighing deeply. At once the soldiers led them before Ghulnas, who questioned them, as she had questioned the watercarrier, and then had them led to prison as well. Finally the Jewish merchant and the knight also came to the well, and also betrayed their grief by sighs and tears, and were sent to prison in turn. Then, when they were all together, Ghulnas, the vizier's daughter, had them brought into her presence and said: "Would you recognize the person for whom you sigh and weep if she were to appear before your eyes?"

And when she had said this, she threw off her royal mantle and showed herself dressed in the robes of a princess. At this sight all six men fell on their knees and begged her to forgive them, because what they had done had been prompted by their great admiration for her beauty. And the daughter of the vizier was kind to them and forgave them freely; but it was the watercarrier whom she took by the hand and placed on the throne beside her, after she had ordered him to be clothed in royal robes.

Then she called together the nobles of the kingdom, told them her story and begged them to make her dear lord and master, the former watercarrier, their king. To this they all agreed, and a few days later Ghulnas and the watercarrier were married with royal pomp and splendor.

The Jewish merchant, the knight and the three fishermen were sent off to their own country with many rich gifts, yet rich as were the gifts they had received, there was not one of them who would not gladly have given them up to change places with the watercarrier.



## ACOYNAPA AND THE VIRGIN OF THE SUN

ONCE upon a time a young shepherd named Acoynapa tended the flock of white *llamas* which the Inca sacrificed to the sun, high in the meadows of snow-clad Cordillera. The mountains rose above the pleasant vale of Yucay, where lay the palace of the Inca. But the chime of the little golden bells on the Inca's hammock did not reach the heights, where the great condor, the bird of light, hung silently in the blue skies above the shepherd. Acoynapa was a gentle youth, and he played sweetly on his *pincullu*, the flute all shepherds use, while his flock cropped the herbage.

Now, one day two virgins of the sun, whose palace lay in the valley below, wandered over the green mountain meadows and met Acoynapa. They spoke kindly to him, and he told them his name and that he came from a town named Laris. One of the virgins—she was called Chuquillantú, "The Shadow of a Lance," because she was so graceful and slender—noticed that the shepherd wore a tablet of silver on his forehead. Looking closer, she saw that it represented two figures devouring a heart, and she took it in her hands and toyed with it.

But when she had returned with her companion to the palace of the sun virgins, Chuquillantú at first could not close her eyes, for her heart had gone out to the shepherd lad. Yet in the end she slept, and as she slept she dreamt a dream. In her dream she saw a bird flying from one tree to another, singing softly and very sweetly. And after singing for a time the bird put his head to one side, looked at Chuquillantú and said to her: "Do not sorrow, O daughter of the sun, for all shall be well with you!" Then Chuquillantú told the bird how her heart had gone out to the gentle shepherd Acoynapa, who tended the white *llamas* of the sun on the mountainside above Yucay. Her love bade her seek the shepherd, yet she feared to do so lest her father the sun be angry, for the virgins of the sun must give up all hope of earthly love.

But the *checollo* bird, who had a voice like a nightingale, said to her: "Rise, and sit between the four fountains!"—for in the court of the sun virgin's palace rose the four crystal fountains, which flowed in the direction of the four provinces of the empire. "There sing your heart's desire. And if the fountains repeat your words, then you may do as your heart bids you do!" And with that the *checollo* bird flew away.

Chuquillantú awoke. She was filled with terror, yet she rose, dressed and sat between the four fountains, and there sang her heart's desire. And she repeated what the silver figure on Acoynapa's forehead brought

to her mind, and sang: "Love and care devour my heart!" And presently the four fountains began to repeat her words in silver, murmuring voices.

And as with Chuquillantú so it had been with Acoynapa. When his visitors had departed he sought his hut, his heart filled with Chuquillantú's beauty. Yet he played his flute with tears and the music touched the heart with grief, for he knew that his love was hopeless. How might a simple shepherd boy hope to win a virgin of the sun?

Now, far off in Laris, Acoynapa's mother, who was skilled in magic, was aware that he suffered. She hurried to his mountain hut, wiped away his tears, and set fragrant herbs a-simmering to make a draught which would cause him to forget his grief. And while they were simmering, Acoynapa's mother encountered Chuquillantú, whose tender heart once more had led her to seek the shepherd. She thought he was out on the mountain with his flock, but he lay sleeping in the hut under a beautiful magic cloak his mother had spread over him. So beautiful was the cloak that when Acoynapa's mother brought it from the hut and showed it to her, Chuquillantú felt a great longing to possess it, and the shepherd's mother gave it to her. For a while Chuquillantú strayed through the meadows looking for Acoynapa, but not finding him she returned sadly to the palace of the virgins of the sun. There the guards, who always examined the virgins



to see that they brought no fillets or necklaces into the palace, saw only the cloak, and allowed her to pass undisturbed.

But this cloak was a magic cloak. While Chuquillantú slept it turned into the person whom it had last covered, and suddenly, there stood Acoynapa. And the shepherd knelt beside her couch and called upon Chuquillantú by name, and she awoke.

Then, with many tears, he told her of his love, and begged her to flee with him from the palace. Once more he turned into a cloak and Chuquillantú, forgetting the vows a virgin of the sun makes, swiftly left the palace and walked from it, wrapped in the cloak, until she reached a ravine out of sight of the guards. There the shepherd Acoynapa resumed his natural shape. Yet one of the guards had followed Chuquillantú out of curiosity. Suddenly he saw a man stand beside her, and he ran to the palace and gave the alarm. Then the lovers fled into the mountains, knowing that they would be pursued. On they toiled for a time, until weariness overcame them not far from the town of Calca. And, being weary, they rested a while. Yet though they had meant to keep watch, their eyes closed in slumber, and they slept until awakened by the shouts of their pursuers, who had drawn near. Then Acoynapa rose and with him Chuquillantú. Yet, just as she had put on one of her shoes of soft, white wool and still held the other in her hand, the sun-god, from

whose palace she had fled, thus breaking her vow, turned her into stone, together with Acoynapa. And there they stood with their faces turned toward Calca. Yet kind was the sun-god, the great Inti, and he fulfilled the promise of the *checollo* bird. For the hearts of Acoynapa and Chuquillantú were no longer devoured by care, and they were united for all time. To this day their figures still stand side by side, for all to see who travel the road between Calca and Huayallapampa.

## HET FAMKE

**W**EST of the Sudersee, off the Friesland coast, a strange thing happens every year. Out of the salt sea water, above the place where the proud city of Stavoren now lies buried beneath the waves, green shoots sprout up. They grow rapidly until great fields seem to be rising above the waters. Soon the ears of wheat appear but—they are barren. And no lark sings above these barren fields, no flower nods among its grasses, and what use is a scythe to cut wheat which bears no fruit.

Hundreds of years ago, on the spot where the fields of barren wheat now rise from the waves, stood Stavoren, the richest and proudest city of Friesland. The ships which filled its harbor were countless in number; gold was the cheapest metal used by the townsfolk; even the dogs ate from silver dishes, and the knockers on the doors were of costly metals. But their wealth made the people of Stavoren haughty and heartless. The richer they grew the less charitable they became, and the most haughty and heartless among them all was a maiden named Het Famke.

None could count her wealth in houses and goods, ships and coined money. But so hard-hearted did she



show herself to the poor that she was said to be a meerwoman—for the meerwomen have no heart, and unless they win the whole-souled love of a human being, they dissolve in foam on the sea-waves when a thousand years have passed. It was for this reason, so the story went, that Het Famke had come out of the sea to dwell in Stavoren among men. Many youths begged her to marry them, for Het Famke was beautiful; yet she refused them all, for the man she wanted, one of her sea-captains, was not among them, nor had he any thought of loving her. So one day, when he brought his ship into port filled with a valuable cargo, she said to him angrily: "Of what use is this rubbish to me? I still lack what is worth more than anything else in the world!" When Het Famke, the meerwoman said this, she meant that she lacked the love which would make the captain her own, heart and soul. The captain, who was a loyal man and eager to do his duty, asked, "Lady, what is worth more than anything else in the world?" And Het Famke answered: "Go find it and bring it to me!"

The captain went back to his ship, took aboard money and goods, and set sail to find the most valuable thing in the world for his haughty mistress. Now, in those days all the costliest and most valuable things in the world came from the East Indies. Cinnamon and pepper, allspice and mace were worth more than double their weight in gold. So the captain laid his

course for the Indian isles, and there loaded his ship with fragrant spices. On his way home, he stopped at the town of Calicut. There, as he passed through the streets, he saw cloths of fine silk, pearls and jewels spread out for sale on mats of woven straw. And his mate, who was with him, said: "Captain, they have no silks and jewels such as these in Stavoren. A woman's heart would delight in them. Why not bring Het Famke the choicest among them?" "Right you are!" said the captain. "Of goods and gear she has more than enough, and so have others. But that which the others lack must be the most valuable thing in the world for her."

He at once sold his cargo of spices, bought pearls, silks and jewels instead, and then set sail with favoring winds for his native land. But in order not to fall into the hands of the Spaniards at sea he took the longer route around Scotland, and passing the Hebrides he fell in with such terrible storms that his ship was flung about for days on the waves, till he lost his course altogether, got into the East Sea and finally took refuge in the port of Dantzic. In Dantzic he met other sea captains from the Low Countries, and as it was now a year since he had sailed from home, he asked news of Stavoren and Het Famke. And the others told him: "The haughty Stavorenens, who fed their dogs from silver dishes, are in a bad way. All their gold and all their goods are of no use to them now. A great

famine has broken out, and the whole country is bare of wheat and cattle.”

When Het Famke's captain heard this the scales fell from his eyes. Now he knew what was the most valuable thing on earth. And he thought to himself: “Heaven sent the storm which drove me to Dantzic, so that I might find the most valuable thing on earth and bring it home to the starving in Stavoren. For what could be more precious than beautiful golden wheat, the gift of the good God Himself, which keeps us fit to live and work!” So he sold the silks, pearls and jewels he had brought from Calicut, and loaded his ship with all the wheat it would hold in their stead, and swiftly set sail for Stavoren.

As soon as he had entered the harbor, he had himself set ashore, hastened to Het Famke's house, and cried: “Lady, I have the most valuable thing in the world aboard! Come and see!” “What?” said Het Famke. “I thought you were somewhere off the coast of Africa, trading for gold and ivory! But since you are here I will see what you have brought me.” So she had herself rowed aboard the ship with him, and he joyfully showed her the golden grain. “And you call that the most valuable thing in the world?” asked Het Famke. The captain answered: “Indeed, Lady, there is nothing more valuable than this golden wheat. There is enough of it to keep the whole city alive and in good health, and to prepare a mansion in heaven for you.”



When Het Famke heard these words she grew as white as chalk and for a time she said not a word. Then she turned to the captain and asked: "On which side of the ship did you take on this cargo?" "On the starboard side," replied the captain. "In starboard, out larboard!" cried Het Famke. "Look sharp, you sailors, and throw the whole cargo overboard on the larboard side!"

"Lady," said the captain, "what are you doing? Think of all the people in Stavoren who must perish of hunger if you do this! If you think my cargo beneath your notice, at least give it away to the poor!" But Het Famke answered with a sigh: "Why should they eat and be satisfied while I must die of hunger?" But the captain did not understand the meerwoman, who meant he had only brought her wheat, and not the love of his heart and soul. So he continued to plead with her. "You should not say such things, Lady. No one may mock God, and His Allpowerful arm can punish the proudest and richest!" Het Famke laughed scornfully: "I am not afraid of Him," said she. "If He be Allpowerful, then let Him take care of His poor and let the wheat which I cast into the sea ripen for them!" Neither pleas nor prayers could move her. The whole cargo of golden grain was flung into the salt water, while the poor of Stavoren looked on with watering mouths and wrung their hands.



“‘In starboard, out larboard!’ cried Het Famke.”





Yet Het Famke's hardness of heart and contempt for God was not to go unpunished. Not long after a great tidal wave swept over Stavoren and carried away Het Famke, together with ships, houses, fields and all her possessions down into the deep. Far inland, those who escaped the flood built a new town behind dikes. But the wheat which the meerwoman had cast into the water, and challenged God to make grow, grows and blooms on the waves year by year, though its ears are always barren. Fishermen say that on clear, warm days the buried city, with its walls and towers, its splendid houses and harbor full of ships rises from the waves, and that Het Famke in the dress of centuries past, may be seen sitting on a rock and looking out over the barren fields of salt-sea wheat. But it is considered unlucky for any one to see the meerwoman sitting there.

## THE THREE MAGIC APPLES

ONCE upon a time, many hundreds of years ago, there lived three kings. The first ruled a land of rich cities and broad fields of sesame and maize. The second ruled a land of endless, grassy plains, where thousands of horses with tossing manes ran wild. The third ruled a little mountain kingdom, whose snow-covered peaks looked down on a green valley where roses grew.

Now, it happened that on the self-same day and hour each of the three kings was given a little son, and when this had happened each of them dreamed the same, identical dream. They dreamt that they stood together in an unknown place, before a black tree whose roots of lustrous crystal disappeared beneath their feet into the darkness of the earth. From the black tree hung three apples: an apple of gold, an apple of steel and an apple like any other, save that it was larger and redder and gave forth a wonderful fragrance. And as the kings stood looking at the apples a voice came from the tree and said:

“The three magic apples which grow on this tree are for your three sons. Each of you shall take one and keep it until his son comes of age. Then he shall

give the apple and his kingdom into his hand, and tell him of the dream he dreamt." Now, the king who ruled the land of rich cities and was the oldest, said: "I choose the apple of gold," for he thought to himself, "Gold is stronger than anything else." No sooner had he said this than the golden apple was in his hand. And the king who ruled the land of endless plains said: "I choose the apple of steel," for he thought to himself, "Steel overcomes gold." Before he had finished speaking he was holding the apple of steel. Then, seeing that there was but one apple left, the third king said: "I will take the apple which is left, for it is fairer than any on earth, and after all, a gift is a gift."

When they awoke, each of the three kings still held the apple of his dream in his hand.

In due course of time the three princes grew up and came of age. Then the king who ruled the land of rich cities called his son to him, turned over the apple of gold and the kingdom to him, and told him of his dream. And no sooner had he given the apple to the young prince than the latter at once began to gather treasure. Throughout his kingdom he increased the taxes. The caravans which brought the riches of far lands into his cities had to deliver a tenth instead of a twentieth of the goods they brought to the royal treasury. The weavers of silk, the miners who washed the golden sands of the rivers, and the divers who brought up pearls pink and white from the ocean depths, had



to give over to the tax gatherers a full half of their gains. And to hold the treasure which flowed to him in an endless stream, the young king built a great, high tower which he named the Tower of Gold. In it sacks of gold and silver were piled up like sacks of wheat; and his whole thought was to fill this tower from top to bottom with treasure.

The second king, who ruled the land of endless plains, gave his son his kingdom and the apple of steel at the same time. But while the first young king thought only of gathering a harvest of gold, the heart of the second was fixed on raising a crop of steel. Night and day the forge-fires of the smiths burned beneath the open sky, as they hammered out swords and spears and shields; the wild horses of the steppes were captured and trained, and the saddlers turned the skins of the cattle into saddles and harness. And in the course of time, for every golden coin the first young king had in his Tower of Gold, the second young king had a wild horseman in steel, ready to draw sword at his bidding.

But what of the son of the third king? When he came of age and his father turned over to him the little green valley in which the roses grew, he thought neither of gold nor of power. The king of the land of rich cities kept his apple of gold in a casket of crystal, the king of the land of endless plains kept his apple of steel in a bag made of the skin of a white doe,

adorned with precious stones. But the king of the little valley took his apple and said: "Why should I keep it for myself? Perhaps it will bear others of its kind, and then all the people of my valley will enjoy this wondrous fruit." And while the two other kings were gathering golden treasure and fighting men, the third planted his magic apple, and from it grew a wonderful tree which rose to the skies and bore fruit by the thousandfold. And so fragrant were its apples and so delicious to the taste, that those who ate them grew content and happy; their daily tasks seemed lighter, and love and kindness toward their fellow beings filled their hearts. Gradually, as more and more of the seeds of the trees were planted in the course of years, the valley kingdom came to be surrounded by a hedge of fragrance on all sides, a fragrance which filled the souls of the valley people with gladness.

Now, when all the horses with tossing manes had been captured and trained, and all the men in his kingdom had been clothed in steel and provided with weapons, the king of the endless plains smiled to himself. He stepped out in front of the great tent in which he dwelt and cracked his whip with nine lashes in the air. And at the crack of the whip his wild horsemen began to ride by thousands toward the land of rich cities and fertile fields. They rode like the wind, their arrows darkened the sky, and where the hoofs of their savage horses had trod no green thing grew. When

they reached the chief city of the king with the golden apple, he rode out with his soldiers to meet them. But his soldiers were few in number, for he had dismissed many brave men to save their pay and the quicker to fill the Tower of Gold. So his soldiers were beaten and he was slain by one of the wild horsemen who did not even know who he was. Then the king of the endless plains went into the Tower of Gold. It was like a stone hive filled with priceless honey. The floors of the tower were paved with silver bars; the sides of the walls were hidden by sacks of coined gold; chests of cedar were bursting with jewels and pearls and precious stones. And the king was glad to think that his father had chosen the apple of steel, for here was proof that its magic was stronger than that of the apple of gold. And when at last, in the top-most room of the tower, the young king found the crystal casket containing the apple of gold, he smiled again, for the apple's golden glow had faded, and it had turned into dull and tarnished brass.

So, taking the treasure with him, he returned to his own land, and sent his wild horsemen forth north, south, east and west, until he had overcome all the countries of the Asian world. Then he had his wise men draw a map of the lands, so that he might see whether he had overlooked the conquest of a single country. On this map the kingdoms he had conquered were painted red, and the whole map was red with the



exception of one white little corner, and that was the little valley kingdom over which the third king ruled. Now, when the king of the endless plains saw this little white spot on his red map of conquest, he frowned and called for the captains of his horsemen. "How is it that this land has not been conquered?" he cried. Then one of the captains told him that an army had been sent out against it, but had returned without accomplishing anything. "And how was that?" asked the king. "Were my horsemen beaten?" "They were not beaten, O king," the captain answered, "but they could not fight." The king thought this very strange, and, without losing time, mounted his horse, and with a great host of steel-clad horsemen he himself took the road which led to the unconquered land. In the course of a few days he reached the boundary of the valley kingdom. Here there were no guards or soldiers to be seen, nothing but a row of tall trees which stretched across the pass that led into the valley. And when the king and his men rode closer, a strange thing happened. The trees were filled with great red apples, more beautiful than any the king had ever before seen. They hung from the trees by hundreds, and gave out a fragrance so sweet and powerful that it filled the heart with an unknown peace and contentment.

And when this fragrance came to the king and his horsemen, their swords and spears dropped from their hands, they unbuckled their armor and took off their

helmets and flung them into the grass by the roadside; for it seemed foolish to keep such heavy and useless things. And as they rode along the highway lined with the magic apple-trees, which led to the city of the lord of the valley, the king of the endless plains and his wild horsemen had left all their weapons behind and never noticed their absence. When they reached his palace, the lord of the valley came out to do them honor, with music and rejoicing, and the king of the endless plains leaped down from his horse. Now, when he had started out he had meant to say: "Your kingdom is the only spot of white on my red map of conquest, so give me your young men to serve in my army, and acknowledge me as your king and master!" Instead he embraced the lord of the valley and said: "How glad I am, brother, to be your guest in this pleasant place!" And his host led him into the palace while the people of the city took his horsemen into their houses, and entertained them with their best.

But the king of the endless plains, though a great peace filled his heart as he sat in the palace of his brother king, could not understand the change that had come over his spirit. So at last he said: "Tell me, O king of this little valley, why it is that I have no desire to make you my slave, and take your treasure for myself, and your young men to fight my battles?"

Then the king of the valley smiled and answered:

"Just as the golden apple of the king of the land of

rich cities had turned to dull and tarnished brass when you found it, so has your own apple of steel been eaten away by red rust. My apple is the only one which had endured, and for this there is a reason. It was no common magic apple, but an apple of Paradise. I planted it in the rich black soil of my valley, and it grew and bore fruit a thousandfold. Of course, earth is not paradise, and the apples which have sprung from these earth-grown trees no longer give those who eat them the gift of immortal life, as the original apple would have done. Yet all of them have kept certain qualities of the wonder apple which grew in the sky gardens. They bestow health and contentment, and wherever their magic fragrance spreads there is room only for love and kindness in the hearts of men. That is why you cannot conquer my valley kingdom, for as soon as you draw near the trees which guard it, all save good and kind wishes have to leave your mind."

The king of the endless plains knew that he had heard the truth. He sighed and said: "Your apple was the best of the three, for it has brought you perfect content. The king of the rich cities who held the golden apple thought only of hoarding treasure. I, who held the apple of steel, have thought only of robbing the lands and treasures of others by force of arms. But the apple of Paradise has given you contentment and happiness which can neither be bought with gold nor conquered by steel."



Then he rode off with his wild horsemen and, sure enough, when he returned to his own land, and opened the white doe-skin bag, he found that the apple of steel was eaten away with red rust. But the king of the valley lived in joy and contentment as long as the trees which had sprung from the apple of Paradise flourished in his native land. Yet that was many hundreds of years ago, and now those trees have all died and none even know the place in which they grew.

## THE DREAM OF RUSTAN

ONCE upon a time there lived not so far from the city of Tahauzeguh a young huntsman named Rustan who was not content with his lot in life. Allah had given him skill with the bow and arrow, and he seldom rode into the forest without bringing back game whose flesh, prepared by his cousin Mirza, made a welcome addition to the fruits and vegetables of his Uncle Massud's garden. The skins, which he sold in town, provided many little comforts and conveniences. But Rustan was not grateful for his skill as a huntsman, because his whole mind was filled with a desire for wild adventures and his thoughts were all of winning a throne in some distant land.

Now, these thoughts were not really Rustan's own. He had a black slave named Zanga, who rode with him a-hunting, and it was Zanga, whose tales of bold adventurers who had twisted a royal turban about their brows which had filled the huntsman's mind with fantastic longings. One noon-time, when they had been hunting in the forest as usual, and were resting in the shade of a tree, Zanga said to his master:

"For a long time, master, you have yearned for some splendid adventure which would be worth trying, and

at last there is an adventure to be dared that will make you a king if you dare it. The Sultan of Samarkand is hard beset by the Khan of Tiflis, his enemy, and has promised the hand of his daughter Gulnare to whoever will deliver him from his foe."

When he heard this, Rustan's mind was made up. Why should he live the life of a simple huntsman, content with its daily labor and its small rewards? He would set out for Samarkand that very evening, and try his fortune. At once he rose, bade Zanga saddle the horses, and said: "Let us return to the cottage of my uncle Mussad. There we will rest for a few hours and then start for Samarkand when the night is cool and the full moon shines." So they rode back to Massud's cottage, where Rustan lived with his uncle and his cousin Mirza, and when he came to the cottage, Rustan at once told his uncle of his plans.

But Mussad shook his head when he had listened to them and said: "Be content with the gifts that Allah has already bestowed on you and do not tempt the dangers of the unknown to gratify your ambition!" And Mirza, with tears in her eyes, for she wished Rustan well, added her pleas to his. But Rustan was obstinate; nothing they said had power to move him, and when he saw him so steadfast in his ambition, Zanga grinned with satisfaction till all his teeth showed.

When Massud and Mirza had left him, Rustan



stretched himself out on his couch to sleep for a few hours before starting out on his journey.

After he had slept and awakened refreshed and in good spirits, he called Zanga, who led out the horses, and they began their journey by moonlight. For many days they travelled and nothing out of the ordinary happened; but when only a few hours' distant from Samarkand, they entered a great forest and, after riding a short distance, came to a defile among whose trees on one side flowed a river. In the defile a man whose aigrette of heron feathers was fastened to his turban by a diamond clasp, and whose silken jacket was embroidered with gold, was trying to defend himself with a short hunting spear against an enormous serpent. It was the Sultan of Samarkand himself, who had been separated from his suite while hunting, and was now in danger of losing his life.

Rustan drew his bow from the quiver and shot three arrows at the monster in rapid succession. But though each of his arrows hit the mark, they dropped with blunted points from the serpent's scales, which were tougher than the toughest leather. Then Rustan was alarmed and, following Zanga's example, he had already turned his horse to flee, when a stranger broke from the brush. The sultan did not see his new defender, for at that very moment, exhausted by his efforts, he fell unconscious to the ground. In the mean-

while the stranger, who held a short, curved scimitar in his hand, rushed on the snake, with one blow severed its head from its body and then dragged the sultan's body out of the way of the threshing coils. Having done so, the stranger disappeared in the brush again and was lost from sight.

It was at this moment that the unconscious sultan opened his eyes and seeing Rustan, who had drawn near, bending over him, thanked him with moving words for having saved his life. Rustan was an honest enough fellow at heart and his first impulse was to tell the sultan what had really happened. But Zanga nudged him violently to keep silence, and, yielding to his slave, he said not a word of the unknown who really was the hero of the day. He accepted the sultan's thanks—which he had done so little to earn—and a splendid dagger with a jewelled hilt which the grateful prince drew from his girdle and presented to him. The sultan's attendants now came up, and he rode off after making Rustan promise to seek him out at the palace in Samarkand.

But no sooner had the prince and his suite disappeared than the bushes again parted, and the unknown who had killed the serpent once more entered the glade. "Where is the man whom I rescued?" he cried. "He must have been some great prince, to judge by his attire, and will no doubt give me a fitting reward for having saved his life!" Rustan did not know what

to answer, but while he blushed with shame, Zanga said in a sneering voice: "Those who want rewards should be on the spot when rewards are distributed. The early bird catches the worm. Besides, you only finished what my master began. The serpent was already half dead from his arrows when you arrived. So make the best of your loss and wish for better luck another time."

Then the unknown rightly grew indignant. "You and your master are no better than a pair of thieves," he cried, "to try and take credit where none belongs to you!" Zanga whispered in Rustan's ear. "You dare to call me a thief?" shouted the huntsman, and spurred his horse at the unknown. The latter, taken by surprise, tried to ward off Rustan's blow with his scimitar, but the latter's jewelled dagger—the grateful sultan's gift—was already buried in his chest. He flung up his arms and did not move again. "A good riddance," grumbled Zanga, and, taking the body by the feet, he dragged it a short distance and flung it into the river whose water at once carried it away. Rustan wiped his blood-stained dagger on the grass, and both continued on their way to Samarkand in silence.

There they were received with every mark of honor in the sultan's splendid palace. It was built of marble and surrounded by gardens of roses. Artists from far-away Bagdad had adorned its walls with texts from the Koran in golden lettering, and artisans from Damascus



had carved its metal doors. After he had made him rich gifts of blooded horses and princely garments, the Sultan of Samarkand gave Rustan rooms in the palace, and made him captain of all his soldiery. Soon Rustan rode out of the city's gate at the head of the sultan's army and in a great battle which followed, he defeated the horsemen of the Khan of Tiflis, and rode back to Samarkand as a victor, with captured banners and a long train of pack-mules laden with the plunder of the enemy's camp. Zanga lost no chance to praise his master's skill and bravery, and Rustan seemed to have reached the height of fame, and began to look forward to the hand of the lovely Gulnare with all confidence.

Yet none but Allah can foretell what a day may bring forth. The morning following his triumphant entry into the city, the body of the unknown was found lying on the river-bank, and thrust through his chest was the sultan's jewelled dagger. There was no help for it; one wrong deed leads to another, and Rustan now had to add falsehood to assassination. But he brazened it out, denied that he knew anything about the dead man, and said he had lost the dagger in the forest, and been unable to find it again. His word was not questioned, and instead of finding himself in danger of his life, he was now in greater favor than before.

Yet Rustan was not satisfied. His ambition was to mount the throne itself, and this he could not do while the sultan lived. Now, the sultan had a trusted old

cup-bearer named Kaleb, who was dumb, and one day when Rustan had been talking over matters with Zanga, the latter said: "The thing to do is to put poison in a glass of sherbet and have innocent old Kaleb offer it to the sultan. Then we will say that Kaleb poisoned him and since Kaleb is dumb he will be unable to defend himself." And Rustan made no objection to this horrid plan, for he had grown so used to thinking and doing evil, that he almost felt indignant at the sultan for not removing himself instead of putting him to that trouble.

Zanga soon took advantage of a favorable opportunity, and the poison was slipped into the draught of snow-cooled sherbet, which old Kaleb handed his master without suspicion, and when the latter died, both Rustan and his slave accused the old cup-bearer of the murder. Again Rustan was believed, and since Kaleb could not say a word to defend himself, he was cast into prison. Yet this new crime did not have the desired result. Rustan did not gain the throne. Gulnare was declared Sultana of Samarkand, and instead of marrying Rustan she merely continued him in his position as head of the army.

Rustan, who as time had gone on, had grown more cruel and unscrupulous, now misused his high position to begin a reign of terror. Following Zanga's advice, he began to gather gold to win the army and deprive Gulnare of her throne with the aid of the soldiers.

He cast the rich men of Samarkand into prisons and did not release them until they paid him large sums of money. At last the relatives of the unfortunate Kaleb, whom he had also robbed of all their wealth, rose against Rustan. Followed by a great crowd of the people, they surrounded the palace, clamoring for justice and begging the sultana to hear them. The princess ordered Kaleb to be brought to the great hall and, in his excitement, the dumb cup-bearer for the first time found his voice and told the true story of the sultan's death!

The sultana at once called on the soldiers to seize Rustan; but rushing from the hall, followed by the evil Zanga, he flung himself upon a horse and escaped from a postern gate, closely pursued by the sultana's infuriated guards. The angry horsemen at last caught up with Rustan in the same wooded defile in which he had committed his first crime. Surrounded on all sides by his enemies, his horse leaped into the river and—at that moment Rustan awoke in his uncle Massud's cottage!

At first Rustan could not believe his eyes when he found himself in the familiar cottage; but then he realized that Allah had sent him the dream he dreamt in order to show him that contentment was the true secret of earthly happiness. He shuddered when he realized the crimes which ambition might have led him to commit, and that in the end all those selfish plans based



upon blood and treachery would have come to naught.

Rustan did not take the road to Samarkand that evening in the full of the moon with Zanga. Instead he called his evil slave to him, gave him his freedom, and told him he never wished to see his face again. And the following morning he whistled as he examined his bow and arrows and prepared to set out for the forest with a glad heart. His cousin Mirza, to whom he confessed his love, had promised to marry him, and he looked forward to a life of quiet and contented happiness untroubled by ambition and unstained by crime.

## THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE

ONCE upon a time there were twelve jolly lansquenets who had fought in the wars and had little to show for it but the scars of the wounds they had received in battle. Now, the wars being over for the time, they were wandering along the king's highway, sad and in low spirits, because they did not know from one day to the next whether they would be able to get a bite to eat, and as they went along, they came across a little man in a grey coat who greeted them. "Whence come and whither away?" said he. And the twelve lansquenets answered: "We have come from the wars, and we are bound for wherever we can gain wealth, but have not as yet found the place!" To which the little man in the grey coat replied: "I will show you the art of gaining gold, if you follow me, and it shall cost you nothing."

Of course the lansquenets all wanted to know how they could gain gold, and the little man in grey said: "The way to gain gold is by means of the Wheel of Fortune, which obeys my command. Every one who rides the Wheel of Fortune is able to foretell the future, and discover the hidden treasures of gold and

silver buried in the earth. But I can let you ride it only on one condition—that you agree to let me carry one of you off with me.”

Then the lansquenets asked the little man in grey which one among them he wanted to fly away with. But the latter only said: “Whichever one of you best pleases me. That will be shown later, because I do not know now who it will be.” When they heard this, all the lansquenets agreed to the condition, for each thought that if any one were carried off by the little man it would be one of the remaining eleven and not himself. Besides, they said to one another, all of us have to die some time, and since we have come safely through battle and pestilence we will win through this danger as well—with only one exception.

As soon as they had given him their word to abide by his condition, the little man in grey led them to the place where the Wheel of Fortune stood. It was so large that when all were seated on it, they were three fathoms distant one from the other. They need only to remember one thing, said the little man in grey, and that was that none must look at the others while sitting on the Wheel: if he did so he would fall off and break his neck. And when they had all seated themselves in their places, the little man in grey seized the Wheel in his claws—for he had claws both on his hands and feet—and began to spin it around; and it took twelve hours in succession to spin the Wheel of



Fortune around a single time. To the lansquenets on the Wheel it seemed as though they were floating above water as clear as a mirror, in which were reflected all their intentions, good and bad, and all of the people whom they saw were people they knew and could call by name. Above them was a sea of fire, from which hung long streamers of flame.

After they had endured the Wheel of Fortune for twelve long hours, it suddenly stopped, and the little man in grey flew up through the fiery sea above their heads with one of their number; while at the same moment the others lost consciousness, and fell down as though stunned in a deep slumber.

When they awoke, all the clothes on their bodies, even their very shirts, had grown so brittle that they fell to pieces at a touch, because of the great heat above the Wheel.

So the eleven jolly lansquenets rose and each went his way, filled with the hope that now all the earth's buried treasures of gold and silver would flow into his hands, and that he would live in ease and splendor the remainder of his days. But alas, the little man in grey had deceived them, and their expectations were not realized. They had sat on the Wheel of Fortune, it is true, but in spite of the fact, they remained as poor as they had been before, and never even saw a silver groat of all the treasure the little man in grey had

promised them. So, if the little man in grey should ever meet you along the road, and offer you a ride on the Wheel of Fortune, tell him the story of the lansquenets and see what he will say.

## SPIRITUS FAMILIARIS

ONCE upon a time a horse-dealer and carter entered the gate of a large city. He had come a long way with eight horses he had to sell and they were worn out when they reached the town. One of the horses fell and gave up the ghost as it was entering the city gate; another dropped before the stable of the inn; and in the course of the next few days the remaining six horses also died. The poor man was broken-hearted: all he did was to wander through the town, with tears in his eyes, telling every one about his misfortune. Among those to whom he told his tale was another horse-dealer who, when he had heard it, said to him:

“Do not worry, for if you follow my advice you will gain more than you have lost and will never regret it.” At first the man who had lost his horses thought these were idle words, but the other said: “No, no, my friend, do as I say and your loss will be made good!” Then he told him to go to a certain house which he pointed out, and ask for a certain company of wise men who met there. “When you have found those whom you seek,” he added, “tell them of your misfortune and ask them to aid you.”



So the horse-dealer followed his advice, went to the house and asked a boy where he would find the company of wise men who met there. The boy went off, telling him to wait, and in a short time returned and led him to a room where several old men were sitting at a round table. These men addressed him by name, and one of them said: "Eight horses of yours have fallen dead, and you are downcast and hopeless, and you have come to us for aid. Well, you shall have the aid you desire." Then they told him to sit down at another table, and a few minutes later the old men handed him a little box with the following words: "Carry this with you wherever you are, and from this moment on you will begin to grow rich. But promise never to open the box. If you do so you will become even poorer than you were before." So the horse-dealer gladly promised never to open the box, and asked what he was to pay for it. But the old men told him there was nothing to pay, though he had to write down his name in a large book which they laid before him.

Then the horse-dealer set out for his home with the mysterious box. Now, this box, though he did not know it, contained a *Spiritus familiaris*, or a familiar spirit, which looks not quite like a spider and not quite like a scorpion, and never stops moving. It brings its owner good fortune, discloses hidden treasure, makes faithful friends for him, protects him in battle against

iron and steel, and guards him against imprisonment. But a *Spiritus familiaris* is a good thing to get rid of before you die, for if you die with it in your possession, it flies away with you to the evil one from whom it came.

No sooner had the horse-dealer entered his house than he found a bag of three hundred golden ducats lying on the table, which he spent for new horses. And before he left the town in which he had bought the horses, he found a great earthen pot full of old silver dollars in the stable where the horses had been kept. Wherever he went, he had only to put the little box on the ground, and if gold or silver money had been lost or buried anywhere near it, it at once gave out a radiant light, so that it was easy to dig up the treasure-trove. In this way, without ever doing wrong or committing a robbery, the horse-dealer soon became very rich.

But when he told his wife how their riches were acquired, she was frightened and said to him: "You have been given an evil thing! Heaven does not mean men to grow rich by such forbidden means, for we have been told that we must earn our bread by the sweat of our brow. So I beg you, for the sake of your immortal soul, to hasten back to the town and return the little box to the wise men who gave it to you!"

The horse-dealer was moved by his wife's words, and decided to do as she advised. He sent his servant

to the town with the box to return it to the wise men, but the man soon came back with the news that the wise men were nowhere to be found, and that no one knew where they had gone. After that the wife watched her husband carefully to see where he kept the little box and finally noticed that he always carried it in a special pocket he had in his breeches. So one night she got up while her husband slept, took out the box and opened it. Out flew something like a buzzing black fly, which disappeared through the window. Then the woman put the cover back on the box, put the box back in her husband's pocket, and went to sleep again without further worry.

Yet from that hour on, all the horse-dealer's good luck deserted him. His horses fell dead or were stolen; the corn in his barns spoiled or mildewed; his house burned to the ground three times, as fast as he rebuilt it, and all the wealth he had gathered disappeared. In the end he had to toil even harder than before for a living. Yet he was more fortunate than he knew, at that. For the man who dies with a *Spiritus familiaris* in his possession can never reach heaven.



## THE FAITHFUL LION

**I**T was during a voyage that he made into the land of the Turks that Duke Henry of Brunswick's ship was overtaken by a storm and sank. Swimming ashore, the Duke managed to save himself, and soon saw that he was the only one aboard the ship who had escaped, and that the land on which he had taken refuge was an uninhabited island. He wandered about the island for many days—living on the berries he picked—his coat torn by thorns, and not daring to sleep at night for fear of wild beasts.

Then, one day, he saw an enormous serpent fighting with a lion in the forest. The lion's strength had almost given out and the serpent was crushing it in its coils. Though Henry had but little good to expect from either of these savage creatures, still he could not bear to see so noble a beast as the lion perish. With a swift leap he seized the snake below the jaws and strangled it. Then the lion, freed from the crushing coils, crept to Henry's feet, looked up at him and from that hour never left him. Every day it brought its friend various animals, the fruit of its hunting, and Duke Henry dried their flesh in the sun and ate it. No

other wild beast dared come near the ship-wrecked man for fear of the lion, which was the largest on the island.

Yet Duke Henry never stopped planning how he could leave his lonely island and find his way back to human beings once more. At last he built a raft of tree-trunks interwoven with reeds and put it into the water. He waited until the lion had gone hunting in the forest to do this. Then he quickly climbed aboard his raft and pushed off from shore. When the lion returned, earlier than usual, as though driven back by some misgiving, it found its master gone. With a roar of grief it ran down to the shore, and there saw its master far away in the distance, so far away that he looked quite small. Without a moment's hesitation the lion sprang into the great, foaming billows and swam after the raft. The Duke saw it, and felt sorry for the noble beast, for he was sure the lion would perish in the waves. And soon, in fact, he did lose sight of him and was sad at heart. But suddenly the lion came to the surface again on the other side, beat the water with its paws in a last effort and reached the raft. Duke Henry drew it up to safety, and the lion lay down at Henry's feet and slept for three days and three nights without moving, so exhausted was it. Then for many weeks man and beast suffered hunger and thirst and cold together, and were driven about in every direction by storms. And as time went on, one

bit of the raft after another was broken off and carried away by the waves.

At last, one day, they drifted near a large ship. Duke Henry called and waved until the ship stopped and a boat was lowered. When they rowed to the raft, the people in the boat were not a little surprised to see a man and a lion living peacefully together on such a craft. They told Duke Henry they were ready to take him aboard, but they could not take the lion. And though Duke Henry's grief was great he was forced to leave the lion behind. Yet no sooner had he boarded the ship, and no sooner had its sails been spread and it had gotten under way, than along came the lion, swimming in the water after it. The lion swam all day long, and Duke Henry was glad when night fell, so that he would not have to watch his faithful friend sink beneath the waves. But when the sun rose, the lion—though it was weak and had fallen far behind—was still swimming after the ship. Then Duke Henry begged the captain of the ship so stormily to save his friend, and promised such a big reward to the crew, that they finally agreed to take the lion aboard, which they did.

A few days later the ship reached shore, and then Duke Henry had to wander through many countries to get back to his own land; and was stared at by the people in all the towns and villages through which he passed with the lion. No one was willing to give him



a night's lodging, because of his companion. In the forests he was often attacked by robber bands, but was always saved by his lion. Yet both were bleeding from many wounds, and both had fallen away and grown thin owing to their privations, before Duke Henry reached the capital city of his duchy.

Duke Henry's clothes were by now so tattered and torn that his bare skin showed through the rents and tears. His hair and his beard had grown so long and so thick that no one could have put a finger through them anywhere. And, lo and behold, when he entered his city of Brunswick, all was joy and festivity! The houses were hung with bright rugs and streamers, and the people were going about in their Sunday clothes. So Duke Henry asked an old woman what it was all about. "Duke Henry's wife is celebrating her wedding to-day," said she. "Seven years have gone by, and she has heard that the Duke is dead, and has given up waiting for him to return." Then Duke Henry, followed by the lion, went through the crowded streets, where every one stared at him with wide-open mouth, to his castle. But when he tried to enter it the servants would not let him.

So he seated himself by the castle wall, beside the door, and the lion lay down at his feet and rested its head on his knee. Only one servant felt sorry for him and brought him a bowl of soup. "Thanks," said Duke Henry, "but bring my lion something to eat,

tool!" So the servant brought the lion some scraps. Again Henry thanked him and then said, "Now ask the bride for a goblet of the wine she drinks herself, in order to gladden my heart!" The servant hurried to the Duchess and told her what the beggar-man had said, and also that wherever he went a lion followed him. The Duchess was surprised, but notwithstanding she filled a goblet with wine and sent it out to the beggar. "Who may you be," asked the servant, "who ask for this costly wine which is kept for the Duchess' own use?"

But Duke Henry drank and returned no answer. And when he had finished drinking, he drew his golden ring from his finger, dropped it in the goblet and bade the servant carry it back to the bride.

When the Duchess drew the ring from the goblet and found that her own name and Duke Henry's were engraved on it, she grew very pale, rose quickly and went to the castle wall to look at the stranger. And there she saw the torn and tattered beggarman sitting with his lion. At once she had him brought into the great hall, and asked him how the ring came into his possession.

"It is my own ring," said Duke Henry. "And I took it but now from my own finger, where I have worn it for more than seven years past." When the Duchess heard this answer, she looked at the stranger more closely and recognized her husband, and was so over-

come with joy and fear that she sank fainting to the ground. A great uproar arose in the hall. The bridegroom-to-be drew his sword and called to his followers; but the lion stretched him out on the ground with a single blow of his paw.

Duke Henry once more took possession of his castle and lands and bore his wife no ill will because of her intended marriage—for she had honestly thought him dead, having had no news of him for seven long years. He was a protector of the poor and oppressed, and wherever he went his lion went also, so that walking, standing or sitting, he could always lay his hand on the head of the faithful beast. When after long years of happiness Duke Henry passed away, the lion lay down on his grave and refused all nourishment until it also died. Then the lion was buried near its master in the castle in Brunswick and a statue—if you go to Brunswick you may see it, for it stands to this very day—was raised above the place where it lies to honor its faithfulness.



## SAVITRI

ONCE upon a time, in the land of Madras, there dwelt a king who had long hoped and waited in vain for the gods to give him a son. So, seeing that he prayed and did good continually, the goddess Savitri at last took pity on him and promised that at least he should have a daughter. And in due time the promised daughter came into the world, with eyes like lotus-flowers, and was named Savitri in honor of the goddess. She grew up among the trees of the garden and was so lovely to look upon that she seemed to be the own daughter of the goddess herself. Yet, since everyone looked up to her with reverence, no man ventured to approach her with an earthly wish, and the king, her father, waited in vain for an opportunity to adorn her with the wedding robe. At last Savitri said: "Since no man comes to ask my hand in marriage, I will go to the sacred forest, where the holy hermits live, and select a husband myself." So Savitri seated herself in a golden chariot and drove off into the sacred forest.

The summer was already drawing to an end when, one day, the king of Madras was seated talking with a guest, the holy seer Narada. And as they talked, they heard the noise of chariot-wheels and there was Savitri

returning from the forest. With reverence she pressed her forehead to her father's feet and those of Narada. "Why is your daughter still unmarried?" asked Narada of the king. "It was to find a husband that I sent her into the forest," answered her father, and then asked: "Savitri, my child, did you find the man whom you sought?" Savitri hung her head and answered: "Listen, father! Far away from this land there reigned a king named Dyumatsena, who became blind. His son was no more than a boy. So his enemies deprived him of his kingdom and he fled to the sacred forest with his wife and child. There I found him together with his son, Satyavan. And I have chosen Satyavan to be my husband."

Savitri's father was overjoyed and his hands trembled with happiness. But Narada's face was sorrowful and he said: "Alas, what sorrows Savitri unknowingly has prepared for herself!"

"How so?" asked the king, much alarmed. "Did not Savitri know all there was to know about her husband's family?" "Every word they told her was true," replied Narada; "her husband's father is a noble man, her husband's mother a noble woman." "And the son?" said the king. "Is there any fault to find with the son?" "None whatever," was Narada's reply. "The son is a noble youth. He is healthy, handsome, brave, knightly, pious and intelligent." "The gods be praised," said the king. "Alas, you need not praise

the gods," said the sage, "for the son has a defect which outweighs all his noble qualities. A defect that nothing can make good. Listen, O king, and I will tell you a secret which heaven has revealed to me! Satyavan must die in a year's time." For many minutes the king sat speechless, unable to say a word. He was so shaken that the seat on which he sat trembled beneath him. Then he softly whispered to Savitri: "My daughter, choose some other man." But Savitri raised her hand and answered: "I chose but once. And I have chosen Satyavan. Whether he live long or die soon I have given him my heart." "Alas, my child," cried Narada. "You are as much to be praised as pitied." The king sighed: "Take the man whom your heart bids you take, my poor, unfortunate daughter!" he said and weeping, kissed her hair.

Then father and daughter went to Dyumatsena's hut in the forest. "I am poor, and I have been driven from my kingdom," said the latter; "how can my son be a worthy match for your daughter?" "She has chosen," was the king's reply and the preparations for the wedding were at once begun.

When her father returned home from the forest, Savitri laid aside her golden garments and put on a robe of woven bark. She lived peacefully and happily in the forest with her husband and his people, and they came to love her more with every passing day. They would not let her tire herself walking long dis-



tances, and cleared away every stone from beneath her feet. But though Savitri smiled happily and went singing through the forest, hand-in-hand with her husband, she never for a moment forgot Narada's words. At night, when the moon shone, she would sit beside Satyavan while he slept, and look at him with tears in her eyes. How could the year have passed so quickly? She had only gone through the forest with her husband a few times, she had only sat with him beneath the trees once or twice. In four days the year would have come to an end. Then Savitri thought she could move the gods to pity and she vowed to stand motionless on one spot for four days and nights. She placed herself beneath a tree, so close to it that it shaded her, yet so far from it that she could not rest against the trunk. Letting her arms hang down by her side she stood there and looked out into the forest. Her father-in-law and mother-in-law came running up and asked: "Why do you stand there?" And Savitri answered: "Do not ask; I have made a vow." "How long do you expect to stand there?" "Four days and four nights." "That is impossible; no human being could endure it. Your vow is too hard." But Savitri did not answer them, but stood and looked out into the forest. She stood and never moved, as though she had been turned into wood. Only the wind played a little with her hair and lifted it. Night fell, but she did not even shift her weight from one foot to the other. When morn-

ing came the wind had loosened her hair so that it hung down in torn and disordered strands about her face. Yet, though the wind seemed angry with her and shook her, she stood motionless, not even shifting her eyes from the point on which they were fixed. A storm arose and tore the clothes from her body, and yet she did not so much as lift a finger to hold them, but stood motionless as before.

At last the four days and nights were over. Her father-in-law and mother-in-law went to Savitri and said: "Now your vow has been kept. Come and eat." But Savitri, whose face was pale and white, answered: "If the wish comes true, to gain which I kept my vow, then I will eat. If not, I shall never touch food again." In the meantime, Satyavan had slung his axe over his shoulder and was going deep into the forest. "Do not go alone," said Savitri, "but take me with you." Satyavan answered: "You have never yet gone into the very heart of the forest, where I work. It is a long, tiring way. How can you hope to travel it, weak as you are, without having eaten or slept, after standing motionless for four days?" But Savitri answered: "I am neither tired nor hungry. I have made up my mind to go, so do not try to hinder me." Satyavan sighed and said: "If it be your wish, I shall not stop you. But first tell my parents so that I will not be blamed." Then Savitri went to his parents and said: "My husband is going into the heart of the

forest to gather fruit. I cannot bear to be parted from him to-day. For a whole year I have always stayed here at home. And now I have a great longing to see the forest in bloom." Dyumatsena looked at her and saw that a radiance illumined her face. Said he: "Do as your heart bids you do, and go. But you, Satyavan, take good care of your beloved." So Satyavan and Savitri went into the forest, but though Savitri seemed to laugh, her heart was torn with fears.

The forest appeared to be enchanted, so beautiful was it. All the trees were in blossom. The glittering peacocks they met seemed like flowers which had moved from their places. For a long time they went on. The path made wide curves where the creepers grew too thickly, and Satyavan supported Sivatri where the walking was difficult. At last they came to a place where Satyavan commenced to gather fruit, while Savitri sat in the grass. And suddenly Satyavan began to perspire and a keen pain ran through his forehead. He came to Savitri and said: "Savitri, my whole body seems afire! My head pains me as though it were being pierced by sharp knives. I am so weak that I can no longer stand. I shall have to lie down and sleep for a little." Savitri drew his head into her lap; but while he closed his eyes, it seemed as though her heart would burst into pieces, for she and she alone knew that the hour of fate had arrived.

And at that very moment she saw a figure in a scarlet



gown, with a crown on its head, whose eyes were like great red rubies, far greater in size than any human eyes, and as dazzling as the sun. In its hand it held a rope. The vision came over to Satyavan and stood beside him. Then Savitri quickly and carefully laid down her husband's head in the grass, leaped up, folded her hands, and said: "You are no human being! You come from the heavens. Tell me who you are and what you wish?" And the vision opened its mouth and spoke: "Savitri, because you have been so faithful to your husband, I shall deign to answer you. I am Rama, the Prince of Death. And I must bind your husband and lead him off a captive." But Savitri said: "As a rule, you send a messenger for those whom you want. How is it that to-day you come yourself?" "I have come myself this time because your husband is so handsome and so noble that he should not be touched by a servant's hands." And with those words he forcibly drew the soul from Satyavan's body, bound it with his rope, and took it off with him toward the south. And the body lay there, its radiance gone and sad to look upon. But Savitri, though her knees well-nigh gave way, followed after Rama. Soon Rama turned his head and said: "Go back, Savitri! Make ready Satyavan's funeral pile!" But Savitri replied: "Wherever you take my husband, there I, too, must go!" Rama shook his head: "Your faithfulness is beautiful to behold. But go

back, Savitri!" But Savitri, however, paid no attention to the god's words. At last Rama again turned his head: "Make a wish and I will grant it. I will grant anything you ask save this one life alone." Savitri continued to follow him and said: "Then I wish that Satyavan's father may be cured of his blindness and see once more." "Your wish is granted," cried Rama, "and now go back!" But Savitri kept close to his heels. "Make a second wish!" cried Rama. "Then give back his kingdom to Satyavan's father." "Your wish is granted!" But Savitri did not cease to follow him. "Make a third wish!" said the god. "Grant that my father may have a son." "Your wish is granted!" Savitri's feet were bleeding, the boughs of the trees struck her, blood and perspiration streamed down her face. Her knees gave way, but even on her knees she still crept after Rama and kept close behind him. Rama stopped. "Make any wish you choose!" he said. Then Savitri clasped his feet. "Give back his life to Satyavan again!" "Your wish is granted!" cried Rama, and he untied the cord which bound Satyavan's soul and disappeared in the forest.

Panting, stumbling and falling a hundred times, and again picking herself up and pressing on, Savitri returned to the place where her husband's body lay. She flung herself on the ground and pressed her face to his. And the breath returned to his breast, the color to his cheeks. He opened his eyes and looked about



him in astonishment. "How long I must have slept," he said. "Why did you not awaken me? Where is the red man who dragged me off with him?" Savitri kissed him tenderly and answered: "To-morrow I shall tell you all about it. Now rest your head in my lap. See how beautiful the night is: the stars are all shining in the heavens." "It is strange and ghostly here in the forest at night," said Satyavan; "let us hasten home." "We would not find our way in the dark," said Savitri; "let us stay here, beloved." "My head no longer aches, I feel strong and well again. Let us go home, for they will worry on our account," answered Satyavan, and as he spoke his eyes still showed the terror of the dream he had dreamed. And as he thought of his parents, he raised his arms in his grief and began to weep aloud. Then Savitri wiped away his tears, rose, ordered her hair, and helped Satyavan up. She hung the basket of fruits they had gathered on a branch, and took his axe over her right shoulder. She laid her husband's hand on her left shoulder, and put her right arm about him. Thus they felt their way home through the darkness.

At home, at that selfsame hour, Dyumatsena had recovered the light of his eyes and could see once more. He saw the table, saw his own hands, the house and the trees surrounding it, saw everything. He called his wife and pointed out everything to her, to show her how well he could see. But now he was so happy that



he could not wait for his son to return home. Why did he linger so long? "O my son, my faithful daughter! Where have you gone? Night has fallen and you do not return!" he cried. And while his wife comforted him, Satyavan and Savitri, their arms about each other, came from between the dark trees. A fire was lighted, and while all gathered around it, Dyumatsena, drinking in the sight of his son and his daughter-in-law, said: "Tell your story, my children! I feel that we are surrounded by wonders." Then Savitri, her eyes downcast, told all there was to tell, blushing with happiness. When the dawn gleamed rosy through the green branches, messengers came to the hut in the forest. "King Dyumatsena," they said, "your enemy has been slain by his own soldiers! Return to the kingdom which is yours, and reign over it once more!" They had hurried so to bring the good news that they fell exhausted to the ground and their foreheads had to be cooled with water and their chests rubbed. "All happens according to Rama's word," said Savitri, "and what has not yet happened will come to pass as he has promised." And she went into the hut with her husband.

## THE TALKING SNUFF-BOX

AS it often happens in this world of ours, once upon a time there was a young man who went a-travelling. And, as he went a-travelling along the road, what should he happen to see lying in the dust one day but a golden snuff-box. He stooped, picked it up and no sooner had he opened it than the snuff-box cried: "*Que quieres? Que quieres?*" which, you might as well know, is Spanish, and is as much as to say: "What do you want? What do you want?"

The young man was much frightened when he heard the snuff-box speak, for he had never heard a snuff-box talk before, and hurriedly shoved it into his pocket; fortunately, he did not throw it away. But as he kept on along the road he forgot his fear, and thought to himself: "The next time that snuff-box says '*Que quieres?*' to me, I'll know very well what to answer." And after a while he took out the snuff-box, opened it and, sure enough, the snuff-box immediately said "*Que quieres?*" And no sooner had the snuff-box said "*Que quieres?*" than the young man quickly answered: "A hatful of gold!" And that very moment he had his hat in his hand, and the hat was filled with gold, just as he had asked.

You may well imagine that the young man was delighted, for now he knew that he would never be in need. And he travelled on and on and on, until at length, after wandering through various forests, he came to a handsome castle, in which dwelt a king. So the young man entered the castle and looked over everything as though he were the owner. Soon the king came up and asked him what he was doing there. "I am looking over your castle," said the young man. "Wouldn't you like to have one as fine?" said the king. The young man did not answer a single word; but when evening came and the sun was going down, he took out his snuff-box and as soon as he opened it the snuff-box cried: "*Que quieres?*"

"I want a castle built on this very spot," answered the young man, "with golden laths and diamond bricks, and filled with gold and silver furniture." And no sooner had he finished than he saw—right opposite the king's castle and facing it—the very castle he had demanded. When he woke the following morning the king rubbed his eyes, and could not imagine where the magnificent palace he saw, which glittered and glistened in the sun, could have come from. And all his servants stood and stared with him.

Then the king put on his royal robes and went into the new castle and said to the young man: "It is plain to me that you are a person of great power and able to do many things. Come over to my castle and meet my



daughter, for I think it would be a good idea if you married her." The young man had no objection, and went to the king's castle, met and married his daughter, and for a time they were as happy as could be.

But the queen was very jealous of the young man and of her daughter. And when her daughter said that her husband had a talking snuff-box, which asked them what they wanted and gave it to them as soon as they told, she bribed one of her servants to steal the magic snuff-box for her. So the servant kept her eyes open and took good note of where the young man laid the snuff-box when he went to bed; and when she knew she crept into the castle in the middle of the night, while every one was asleep, carried off the golden snuff-box and brought it to the old queen. And the old queen almost danced with joy, so happy was she.

No sooner was she alone than she opened the snuff-box, and sure enough the snuff-box at once said: "*Que quieres?* What do you want?" The queen had an answer ready: "I want you to take me and the king my husband and all our servants off in the new, handsome castle to the other side of the Red Sea, and leave my daughter and her husband here in the old castle!"

So when the young couple woke up the following morning, there they were in the old castle and their snuff-box was gone. They looked and they looked, here, there and everywhere, but though they upset the

entire castle searching for it, the snuff-box was not to be found. So the young man said: "There is no time to lose! I must set out at once to hunt for my golden snuff-box and my new castle." He mounted his horse and took with him as much gold as he could carry, and once more set off travelling. And he travelled far and wide, searching in vain for his snuff-box in all the neighboring countries. At last he had spent all his money without discovering anything, but still he kept on, begging his way as he went, though his poor horse was lean and weary.

Finally some one told him that he ought to go to the moon. It was a long journey to the moon, no doubt, but it was certain the moon could tell him where to find what he had lost. So the young man set out, and some one way or another—we need not worry just how—he managed to reach the moon. And there he met a little old woman who said to him: "What are you doing here? My son has one bad habit—he devours all living creatures that come here. If you follow my advice, you will turn right around and go back to the place from which you came."

But the young man told her all his troubles; how he had come into the possession of the magic snuff-box; and how it had been stolen from him; and how he was now penniless, far from his wife and deprived of every comfort. "Perhaps your son, in his journeys through the sky, may have seen my castle built of golden laths

and diamond bricks, and filled with gold and silver furniture?" the young man ended. No sooner had he finished talking than the Moon himself appeared, and the first thing he said was: "There must be a human being here, for I can smell him!" But when his mother told him an unfortunate young man, who had lost all he had, had come to consult him, he was filled with pity, thought no more of making a meal of him, and told his mother to bring him out from the place in which she had hidden him. So the young man came forward and asked the Moon whether by some chance he had not seen a castle built of golden laths and diamond bricks, and filled with gold and silver furniture, for he was the owner of that castle, and it had been stolen from him. But the Moon shook his head, and replied that he had not seen it; but that perhaps the Sun had, for the Sun covered more ground and travelled a greater distance than he did. And he advised the young man to tell his story to the Sun.

So the young man left the Moon and set out once more, pushing on as well as his horse's weakness allowed, and begging his way as he went. At last he reached the sun in some one way or another—we need not worry just how—and when he got there, he found another little old woman, who also said to him: "What are you doing here? Get away as quickly as you can, for my son devours every Christian he meets!"



But the young man said no, he would not go, because he was so unhappy it made no difference to him whether he lived or died. He told her how he had lost everything, and about his castle that had no equal in the world, for it had been built of golden laths and diamond bricks, and was filled with gold and silver furniture. And he told her how he had been seeking for it for a long, long time, and that there was no man so unfortunate as himself. Then the little old woman hid him in the house. But when the Sun came home the first thing he did was to cry: "I smell a Christian and I want him for dinner!" But his mother told him of the unfortunate young man who had lost his all, and had come to ask his advice; and the Sun felt sorry for him and told his mother to bring him from his hiding-place.

So the young man came out and asked the Sun whether by any chance while he was on his travels he had seen a castle without an equal, built of golden laths and diamond bricks, and filled with gold and silver furniture. Then the Sun answered that he had seen no such castle, but that perhaps the Wind might have found it, for the Wind made his way into every corner of the earth, and there were few things hidden from him. If the Wind did not know where the castle was to be found, then no one could tell him. So the poor young man rode off again.

He pushed on as well as the strength of his poor,

tired horse would let him, begging his way as he went. And in some one way or another—we need not worry just how—he managed to reach the house of the Wind. There he found a little old woman pouring water into a number of hogsheads, who at once asked what he meant by coming to her house. Her son ate everything in sight, she said; he would soon arrive, roaring and blustering, and then he had better look out for himself. But the young man said it made no difference to him whether he were eaten or not. Then he told her how he had been robbed of his handsome castle that had not its equal in the world, with all its wealth; how he had left his wife to go and hunt for it; and how the Sun had sent him to consult the Wind. So the old woman hid him beneath the stairs and soon the South Wind came flying in as though he meant to tear up the foundation of the house. Thirsty as he was, he yet scented the presence of a Christian in his home, and before drinking begged his mother to bring out the creature she had hidden, for him to eat. But his mother told him to eat and drink what she had set before him, and then repeated the story of the young man's misfortune and how the Sun had spared his life, and sent him to ask the Wind's advice.

The Wind in turn felt sorry for the young man, and told his mother to fetch him out from beneath the stairs. So the young man repeated his tale to the Wind: how he was hunting for his castle; and that if

the Wind knew nothing about it then no one else would. He added that the castle which had been stolen was built of golden laths and diamond bricks, and filled with gold and silver furniture, and asked the Wind whether by any chance he had seen the castle somewhere.

Then the Wind said: "Yes, yes, I have seen it! I passed and repassed it to-day all day long, and was unable to blow off a single brick."

"Could you tell me where it is?" inquired the young man.

"It is far, far from here," answered the Wind, "on the other side of the Red Sea."

But the young man was not discouraged when he heard this, for he had already travelled so many weary miles.

Off he set at once and—we need not worry just how—in some one way or other managed to reach the country on the other side of the Red Sea. When he got to this country he inquired here and there to find out whether he could not get a place as a gardener on some estate. And he was told that the gardener of the beautiful castle had gone off, and that perhaps he might be taken on to fill his place. You may imagine how pleased and satisfied the young man was when he heard this. He went to the castle and asked whether they needed a gardener. And they told him yes, and took him on.



Then the young man settled down contentedly to his gardening work; but whenever he could he talked to the servants about their master and mistress, and their wealth and power. At length he talked to one servant and when he found she knew where the snuff-box was, he at once asked her to let him see it, telling her he was very curious to know what it looked like, and promising to reward her liberally if she would bring it to him. So one evening the servant brought him the snuff-box. When he had looked at it, she took it back again, and the young man made careful note of the place in which it was kept.

That night, when all in the castle were fast asleep, he stole in and took his snuff-box again. Ah, how happy he was when he once more held the golden snuff-box in his hand! Imagine with what joy he opened it! And, just as it had always done, the snuff-box, as soon as he opened it, cried: "*Que quieres?* What do you want?" And the young man answered: "*Que quiero? Que quiero?* What do I want? What do I want? I want you to carry me back with my beautiful castle to the place where it used to stand, and I want you to take the king and queen and all their servants and set them afloat on a raft in the middle of the Red Sea!"

And no sooner had he said these words than he found himself in his castle with his wife, and the castle was

back in the very place where it had first stood. There he and his wife lived happily ever after, and whether the raft in the middle of the Red Sea ever floated ashore or not is something which never worried them.

## BROTHER AHMED

ONCE upon a time, many, many years ago, there was a pious dervish or monk named Ahmed, who lived in a cloister of the Adawite brotherhood in one of the rose-filled valleys of Kashmir. Ahmed was a favorite with the other dervishes, because of his sweet and gentle disposition, and his willingness to oblige his comrades in all things. He spent his time in the study of the holy books, in fasting and in prayer, and his pious life seemed to make sure his inheritance of those gardens of delight with gushing fountains, which the Koran says shall be the reward of the faithful.

Now, it chanced one day, after the morning prayer had been said, that Ahmed wandered forth from the cloister. In his hand he carried a book of the sacred traditions, and as he walked he read. In the book he found described the paradise of Allah, where his servants recline on soft couches, while a cup is borne round among them from a fountain, by large-eyed *houris*, fair as the sheltered egg. And Ahmed read further that a hundred years of earth were no more than a fleeting moment of Allah's paradise.

When Ahmed read this, a doubt arose in his mind, for it seemed impossible—though with Allah all things



were possible!—that a fleeting moment of paradise should equal a hundred long years of earth. Turning this thought over in his mind, he stood among the roses, while the butterflies darted hither and thither in the sunshine.

And suddenly, as he stood there, a little bird flew down from the skies and began to sing with so sweet a voice that Ahmed let fall the holy book he had been reading in the fulness of his joy. All that he had read of the delights of paradise seemed like nothing at all compared to the song of this bird: a thousand sweet-toned flutes could not have given forth so enchanting a sound. And Ahmed wanted to catch the little bird; but it would not allow itself to be caught. It fluttered just ahead of him on snow-white wings whenever he stretched out his hands to seize it, and never ceased singing. And Ahmed, while he listened, nearly swooned with delight, and thought he saw the pearl and jacinth gates of paradise open before him. But the little bird kept fluttering in front of Ahmed. "If I only could catch hold of you," cried the dervish, "you dear little bird! You have so charmed my heart with your song that I would rather hear you than sit on a throne in the Caliph's golden palace in Bagdad! What is the human voice compared to yours!" And as he said this, the little bird suddenly flew off and was lost to sight. "Alas," cried Ahmed, "to think that you have flown away, and that I shall never hear you sing

again! All my joy is turned to sorrow and my whole heart mourns!"

Then, while Ahmed stood looking after the little bird, the mid-day call to prayer sounded from the minaret of the cloister. Ahmed flung himself down on the ground with his face turned toward Mecca, and when he had said his prayer, hastened back to rejoin his brethren. He knocked at the cloister gate, surprised to think he had been absent so long. A dervish who acted as door-keeper, but whom Ahmed did not recognize, came and peered through the little window set in the upper part of the door. Ahmed called out to him: "Dear brother, let me enter!" But the door-keeper shook his head. "And who may you be?" he asked. "Why, I am your brother, the dervish Ahmed," was the answer, "and the head of our brotherhood and all the brethren know me well." The door-keeper shook his head once more. "Whence come you? I have never seen you before," he replied. "Do not make a mock of me," said Ahmed, "for Allah has no love for the scornful!" Then the dervish who kept the door cried: "For thirty years and more have I dwelt in this cloister, yet never have I seen your face before!" Ahmed could not believe his ears. "I left the convent only a few hours ago, after morning prayer. A little bird lured me to follow it with its song, but flew away before I could catch it."

The door-keeper was annoyed: "You are a stranger

to me and I cannot let you in," said he firmly. "Call my brethren; they will recognize me!" begged Ahmed, and when, after much pleading, the door-keeper went off to do so, the poor dervish thought to himself: "Why do they turn me away? Now I am sorry I followed the bird. But no, I speak foolishly, for I feel no regret. The song of that little bird filled my soul with a joy beyond words."

Meanwhile the door-keeper had gone to the chief of the brotherhood: "There is a man at our gate who claims to have lived in our cloister for forty years; but I know he is not telling the truth, for I have never laid eyes on him before," he said.

"If Allah has sent him hither," said the chief dervish, "we will treat him like a brother." And, turning to some of the others, he said: "Let us go to the cell of our brother Khaled. He is very, very old and had been a dervish of this cloister for more than a hundred years. We will ask him if he knows a dervish named Ahmed."

And when they told the ancient brother that a dervish named Ahmed stood without the gate and asked to be admitted, saying he had lived in the cloister for the last forty years, the old man said:

"I remember that while I was still a novice, on probation, there was a Brother Ahmed in our cloister. He was ever reading the Koran and other holy books, and his piety shone like crystal, such a holy man was



he. Yet one day he left the cloister after morning prayer and was never seen again. The brethren mourned him, thinking that Allah had taken him to paradise. He must be the man who now stands before the gate."

"How long ago was it that this happened?" asked the chief dervish.

"A full hundred years ago, at least," replied the old man.

Then the head of the brotherhood had a book brought in which were written the names of the brethren of the cloister who had died for three hundred years past. And it proved to be exactly one hundred years since Brother Ahmed had followed after the little bird. To him, however, the hundred years had seemed no more than a fleeting moment of time. Not a thread of his gown was faded; not a hair of his head had grown grey. And as he stood among the dervishes whose faces were all strange to him, Ahmed knew what he had doubted when he read it in the book of the sacred traditions—that a hundred years of earth were no more than one fleeting moment of Allah's paradise—was true.

## SOURCES

1. This story represents the development of a motive found in Rink's *Eventyr og Sagn of Grøenland*.
2. Together with Nos. 9, 11 and 13, this tale has been retold from the anonymous Spanish *Cuentas de calleja* (Tales of the street).
3. This tale, found in Walter E. Roth's "An Inquiry into the Animism and Folklore of the Guinan Indians," has been combined with other Indian motives in the telling.
4. After the original in F. V. Esquilbecq's *Contes indigènes de l'Ouest-Africain Français*.
5. Retold after the original in Sir John Malcolm's "Sketches of Persia."
6. After the original in Henry Carnoy's *Contes français*.
7. From the *Liao Chai Chih I*, of P'u Sung-Lang (b. 1622). The tale as retold is based on the translation by Prof. Herbert A. Giles, in the latter's "A History of Chinese Literature."
8. Retold after the original in Carl Meinhof's *Afrikanische Märchen* and H. Chatelain's "Folktales of Angola."
9. See No. 2.
10. Retold after the original in Paul Ernst's *Die Prinzessin des Ostens und andere Novellen*.
11. See No. 2.
12. Retold after the Grimms' original in their *Kinder-und Hausmärchen*.

## 346 FAIRY TALES FROM FAR AWAY

13. See No. 2.
14. A free English retelling of J. K. A. Musäus' *Chronika der drei Schwestern*.
15. Freely retold, together with No. 31, after the colorful originals in Julien Vinson's *Le Folklore du Pays Basque*.
16. Retold from the anonymous *T'ung Tschu Kuo Tze* (History of the Various Countries under the Tschu Dynasty).
17. Retold after the original version by Maria de la Luz Morales, in her *Tradiciones Iberas*.
18. Freely retold after the original Polish fairytale included in Louis Leger's *Contes populaires slaves*.
19. After Aarne's (*Verzeichnis der Märchentypen*)' presentation of the original Serbo-Croatian tale.
20. Retold after the original in J. Berze Nagy's *Nepmesek* (Hung. Folk Fairy Tales.)
21. Nos. 1 and 3 have been retold after the originals in *Deutsche Sagen*, by the Grimm Brothers; No. 2, after the original in K. Maurer's *Isländische Volkssagen*; No. 4, after the original in Grimm's *Kinder-und Volksmärchen*.
22. Freely retold after the *Mille jours et un jour* by Pétis de la Croix, in collation with a German version by Curt Morek.
23. This fairytale, practically the only Inca fairytale which has come down to us, has been retold after Sir Clement R. Markham's version of the Quichua original.
24. Freely retold after an oral Dutch traditional tale, *Der Frauensand*, to be found in the Grimms' *Deutsche Sagen*.
25. An original fairytale by the author of the present volume.
26. Retold after Fr. Grillparzer's *Der Traum ein Leben*, dramatic fairytale in four acts.



27. Retold, together with Nos. 28 and 29, after originals in the Grimms' *Sagen*.
30. In retelling this old Hindoo legend the charming variant by Wilhelm Schmidtbroon has been followed.
31. See No. 15.
32. This lovely little tale has been retold after an original in Leo Greiner's *Das kleine alte Novellenbuch*, with substitution of an oriental for a medieval European background. The motive is one found in the fairytales of various nations.

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